

## JOURNALISM REVIEW

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1981 • \$2.50
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## DANCING IN THE DARK

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To assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define or redefine - standards of honest, responsible service . . . to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent

> -Excerpt from the Review's founding editorial, Autumn 1961

111110000		
Going native without a field map Lured by the jungle drums of darkest Pentagonia, blunders into limited nuclear war	by Fred Kaplan the press	23
Talking to a mule Some advice from a candidate to the press that ig	by Barry Commoner gnored him	30
VDTs: the overlooked story right in the newsroom Is the health and safety issue too close to home?	by Jeff Sorensen and Jon Swan	32
Everyman TV Public access: better look now. It may not be around	by Jeremy Weir Alderson d much longer	39
Something new for Oakland Under a black editor, a new kind of metropolitan da	by Joseph P. Lyford ily is shaping up	44
'And then he was gone' An old cliché still rides tall in the saddle	by Robert L. King	51
Science hits the newsstand	by William Bennett	53

A look at those glossy new science magazines (with a side-glance at TV)

#### DEPARTMENTS Chronicle

A DITICI ES

Dublishow's notes 16	
the Klan for kids; Odd man out in Costa Rica	
west; New Jersey union blues; Cleaning up	
the L.A. Times; The New York Times goes	
The Star's Wienie Waggers; News drought at	

Publisher's notes	16
Comment	19
Books	59
The Geopolitics of Information, by	

Harvard Crimson Anthology: One Hundred

Years at Harvard, edited by Greg Lawless, reviewed by Molly Ivins

#### Unfinished business 66 Letters from Russell W. Gibbons, Robert Chandler, Robert Juran, Roger Angell, David L. Altheide, Marvin J. Miller, and others

Reports	72
<b>National News</b>	
Council report	76
The lower case	89

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intended to be more than a basic system supplemented by private pensions and individual savings. The price for forgetting this has been high and promises to get higher: combined employer/employee FICA taxes on our grandchildren's salaries could reach 25%. Of course, there are alternatives. Social Security could in-<sup>2</sup>Social Security was never crease the official retirement age,

ment-determined need, or simply ... reduce benefits in general?

<sup>3</sup>Two-thirds of small businesses surveyed in 1978 offered no pension plans at all. One reason: Typically, big employers can write off 46¢ in taxes for every pension dollar they contribute, while most small ones can only write off about 20¢. In some cases,

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## CHRONICLE

#### Men will be boys

It started as a joke two years ago among a group of male reporters at *The Minneapolis Star*. It ended late last summer with what *Star* editor Stephen Isaacs called "the most bizarre example of childishness I've seen in twenty-five years of newspapering." Along the way there were serious charges of sexual harassment and discrimination at the paper, and some people in the newsroom suffered deep wounds. A few reporters are still so hurt and angry that they will not talk to certain of their colleagues.

The sad affair began in 1978, when some of the *Star*'s women reporters began meeting informally at lunch to discuss what they perceived as merit-pay and promotion differences between men and women at the paper. Some male reporters reacted to this by placing a memo on the staff bulletin board announcing a meeting of a "Men's Caucus"; its agenda included a "Group laugh over ERA" and a "Report of Committee to Raise Consciousness among members of the vagino-American Community Through an

Office Smelling Salt dispenser." Some women were amused, but Deborah Howell, then the Star's assistant managing editor for news and now an editor at the St. Paul Pioneer Press, recalls that she tore the memo from the board in anger and threw it at the men who had written it.

The women's meetings soon ceased for lack of interest, but the men's caucus, rechristened the "Wienie Waggers," began to meet from time to time on Friday evenings at the Little Wagon, a favorite watering spot for journalists of both sexes. The fifteen or so reporters and editors who gathered there gave each other such titles as Grand Imperial Codpiece, Supreme Exalted Humper, Keeper of the Family Jewels, and Magic Twanger. Much of the Waggers' activity consisted of sending one another memos, which they called "ejaculations," through the newsroom's VDTs. These messages often made fun of news stories concerning women. For example, public debate about drafting women into the armed services prompted the Waggers to call for "a fox in every foxhole," according to Suzanne Perry, a former reporter.

Last summer there was an item in the news that hit closer to home. The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that an employer must take active steps to prohibit continued sexual harassment of an employee by a fellow worker once the employer has been notified it; otherwise, the employer can be held to be guilty of an unfair labor practice.

The Waggers' reaction was not long in coming. The court ruling "necessitates certain defensive measures on our part," declared a hastily written ejaculation. "Unsolicited comments such as, 'Hey, chickie, chickie' and 'Get a load of the jugs on that one' are . . . discouraged, as it is conceivable that some women would determine that it is in bad taste." The memo also referred to women who "can't take a joke."

Two female reporters promptly complained to *Star* management. "We said, 'Look, we can't get our work done because they're being such fools," recalls one of the reporters who, like other women interviewed at the paper, requested anonymity for fear of further harassment.

A number of women say they were also

bothered by editor Isaacs's own attitudes and comments about women, which they claim helped to create an atmosphere that allowed a group like the Wienie Waggers to flourish at the paper. They point specifically to Isaacs's calling a female editor a "dumb cunt" shortly after he arrived at the Star. Isaacs admits he made the remark but says that he meant it in jest and that he has since apologized to the editor. "I happen to have a foul mouth . . .," he says. "I had to make a concerted effort to educate myself."

In July, after reading about the Minnesota Supreme Court ruling and consulting with attorneys, Isaacs announced at a staff meeting that no more personal messages could be sent through the VDT machines. The announcement angered some Waggers, partly because they felt they should have been consulted first and, more importantly, because they felt the new policy was hypocritical, given Isaacs's perceived attitude. Shortly thereafter, the Waggers defiantly issued another ejaculation. This time Isaacs came down harder on them. "We've been put on notice that any kind of personal communication through the [VDT] system is now a dismissable offense," says John Carman, the Star's TV and radio columnist and the Waggers' Grand Imperial Codpiece.

Carman, like many Waggers, regards the entire episode with disbelief. "There never would have been a group like the Waggers," he says, "but for the fact that a few women reacted like they did." Robert Ostmann, the Magic Twanger of the Waggers, who was recently promoted to assistant managing editor for reporting, adds, "The reaction [of the men] all along was, 'Are you kidding? Can't you see it's a joke?" "

For some of the women it was a joke. They even formed their own "Wienie Warmers" group. "At the time I thought it was funny," says one reporter. "It was juvenile and I didn't pay much attention to it." But the joke soured for other women at the *Star*, who view the Waggers as a symbol of deeper problems of sexual discrimination. They claim that women on the paper earn less than men in merit pay, and that women who are promoted are usually channeled into what are traditionally regarded as "women's sections," like food and soft features.



Isaacs, who says he was unaware of such allegations, points out that 55 percent of all new editorial employees hired or promoted by the *Star* last year were women and/or minorities. He also says that he plans to promote more women in the future, but adds that he wants to wait until they've had proper preparation; too many female reporters, he says, have had their careers "ruined by being shoved along too fast."

According to *Star* records, 28 percent of the paper's 130 full-time editorial positions are filled by women; when Isaacs came to the paper in April 1978 the figure was 20 percent. Six of the paper's thirty editors are women, compared to two of nineteen when Isaacs took over. One is in charge of layout,

another of the advanced copy desk; others edit such sections as "Taste," "People," and "Community."

The solidarity created by a strike at the Star in October helped allay the polarization in the newsroom that had been fostered by the Wienie Waggers. The group is now "kind of in limbo," explains a former member. "We are abiding by whatever rules the editor has," says John Carman. No one seems quite sure how things got out of hand, but, as one reporter put it, "Something happened here which was just beyond reason."

Susan Perry

Susan Perry is a free-lance writer living in Minneapolis.

#### Water, water everywhere

The Los Angeles Times has worked hard in the last two decades, and with considerable success, to rid itself of its image as a parochial, pro-business instrument in the hands of the Chandler family. But memories of earlier days, and particularly of how the Chandlers used the paper to help bring water to their vast California holdings, die hard. In fact, the Times has recently revealed a streak of atavism — and has been strongly criticized for conflict of interest — in its coverage of one of the hottest political issues in California: a proposal to expand the state's water system.

Water has always been a precious resource in California. Over the past twenty years, the state and federal governments have spent more than \$2 billion to construct the State Water Project, a system of pumping stations and aqueducts for transporting water from the wet northern part of the state to the arid south. About 85 percent of that water is used to irrigate farmland, whose value has increased tenfold as a result. It is the large landowners in the south - mostly agribusiness concerns — that have been pushing for construction of the latest addition to the state water matrix: the Peripheral Canal, a fortythree-mile-long, 400-foot-wide trench. If approved in a referendum to be held by 1982, the canal, by tapping water from the Sacramento River in the north, would expand the State Water Project's capacity by up to 50 percent.

One of the corporate farmers that would benefit from the project is the Times Mirror Company, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, which owns 25 percent of Tejon Ranch, a 270,000-acre spread seventy miles north of Los Angeles. Over the past decade

the ranch has leased part of its land for oil production and for growing cotton, alfalfa, potatoes, and grapes — the cultivation of which is made possible by the miles of canals, covering half the ranch's expanse, that distribute water from the north. Further development of the estate hinges on construction of the Peripheral Canal.

Given Times Mirror's stake in the new trench, how well has the *Times* covered the debate over its construction? Poorly, according to many environmentalists, northern California farmers (who want to keep the water where it is), and, more recently, a consumer group called Working Alliance to Equalize Rates (WATER). They charge that, in a long parade of pro-canal editorials and superficial news stories, the paper has neglected to report fully on either the benefits agribusiness would receive at the expense of southern California homeowners (who would have to foot the bill) or on the damage the canal would do to wildlife and marine habitats.

In addition, these critics point out, Times stories from the 1960s on have regularly assumed as fact that southern California, as one article stated flatly, "needs the water of the Peripheral Canal" - a contention that is actually at the center of the water controversy. A long 1976 takeout on the canal, for instance, portrayed the issue simply as a political struggle between regions and among interest groups, without examining in any depth whether the water was needed in the first place and who would pay for it if it were. Canal opponents also accuse the Times of inflaming public opinion with scare stories about water shortages, as in a January 1978 editorial stating that after fifteen years of

controversy over the canal, "California can wait no longer to expand a water system that will not be able to supply demand . . . by the mid-1980s."

Times editors deny that the paper has been influenced by Times Mirror's interest in Tejon Ranch. Rather, says editorial writer Jack Burby, editorial support for the project stems simply from the region's perceived water needs. "It may be partly a reflection of regionalism, perhaps, but not of Tejon Ranchism," he says. News editors likewise disclaim any tilt in coverage as a result of the company's stake.

By last spring, however, the *Times*'s conflict of interest began to attract attention from other news media in the state. In April, both *New West* magazine and KPIX-TV in San Francisco began preparing stories on interests likely to benefit from the Peripheral Canal, and both inevitably paid considerable attention to Times Mirror. KPIX producer Robert Klein began peppering *Times* editors and reporters with questions about the paper's coverage.

Thus forewarned, the *Times* began to move on the story, assigning environmental reporter Robert Jones to take a new look at the canal. The result was a comprehensive front-page series running on June 8 and 9 (several days before either the *New West* or the KPIX stories appeared) that analyzed in great detail the projected cost of the project, its possible impact on residential water customers, and its likely benefits to agribusiness. *Times* readers at last learned that the Peripheral Canal might not create the land of milk and honey promised by its advocates.

Those readers learned less, however, about the *Times*'s own connection with the water project. The series did mention that Times Mirror partly owned Tejon Ranch and would thus benefit from the project, but discussion of the tie was exceedingly brief, limited to only one of the series's 122 paragraphs. And that paragraph failed to mention the ranch's ambitious, and public, plans for future development of its land.

"We would look foolish if we started beating our breast in public for something not relevant," says senior assistant metropolitan editor Noel Greenwood, who defends Jones's mention of the ranch as adequate. "If the Tejon Ranch singlehandedly manipulated the state water project, it would be a good story. But there are a lot of participants in this issue."

There soon emerged a sign that the *Times* was reverting to form. In October, Tejon Ranch announced that it plans to build low-density housing and recreational facilities on 112,000 acres — a project local officials



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Lifeline: An aqueduct carries water into a pumping station on land owned by Times Mirror. After being pumped through the hills, the water irrigates cash crops

have said would not be feasible without water from the proposed canal. Robert Lindsey wrote about the announcement in The New York Times; The Bakersfield Californian also carried a story. But no mention of the new plan appeared in the Los Angeles Times; its editors say it wasn't newsworthy.

Some observers of Times coverage argue that the paper, and its owners, would in the long run be better served if the paper were to identify fully its interests in the controversy instead of minimizing them. This is especially true in light of the Chandler family's history of profiting from the public financing of water development, says Robert Gottlieb, co-author of Thinking Big, a history of the Times, and a board member of the Metropolitan Water District, serving Los Angeles. "The direct power of the Chandler family has lessened," he says, "but the problem exists and is magnified by the way editors and reporters view themselves within this powerful institution. They develop an outlook which is similar to the Times's position on policy matters, which in turn is framed by Times Mirror's overall corporate Nadine Joseph

Nadine Joseph is a free-lance writer in San Francisco.

#### All the news that's fit for the Midwest

The national edition of The New York Times is almost a half-year old, and though the jury is still out on its ultimate success, readers seem to be buying the paper more but - in the case of some, at least — enjoying it less.

The new edition, which is composed in New York and transmitted by satellite for printing in Chicago, was selling 40,000 copies daily as of November, compared with the 22,000 copies the Times used to fly out of New York to newsstands across the country. The national paper, which is distributed primarily in nine Midwest states but also in all regions outside the East Coast, has fewer than half the pages of its New York version; New York advertising has been largely eliminated, the newshole shrunk, and the layout altered. And many Times readers (who can now get the New York edition only by airmail several days late) are upset, especially in Chicago, where the paper's Midwest readership is concentrated.

The new Times is "an anemic, insubstantial paper that not only excises many of the articles that longtime Times fans enjoy but also badly edits others," declared a column in the weekly Chicago Reader. Chicago Sun-Times film critic Roger Ebert wrote, a bit hyperbolically, of a "sense of deep personal loss, followed by mounting indignation," brought on by the disappearance of ads for New York cinemas. And a group of concerned readers in suburban Lake Forest were so piqued that they set up a "Committee to Restore the New York Times," urging readers to send protest letters to executive editor A. M. Rosenthal.

The Times experiment was prompted by the rapidly rising cost and growing inconvenience of flying its paper out of New York; now, the paper doesn't have to travel nearly as far, and it can be delivered earlier in the day. But it is an altered Times that arrives. While the same national, international, and business stories generally appear in both editions, those stories are apt to be edited differently in the regional paper and accompanied by reworked headlines.

More bothersome to some readers have been the cutbacks in other parts of the paper. Much New York regional news has been eliminated. The sports section was initially pared down from four to six pages in the New York edition to a single page in the national. (It has since been increased in response to reader demand.) Coverage of fashion, society, and the arts has also been sig-

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## **Working Smarter**

A new buzz-word is coming into vogue among people concerned about America's economic decline. The word is reindustrialization - as in "the reindustrialization of America." It bespeaks the need to revitalize the economy and reverse America's slide into an economic second-rater.

The marks of malaise are all around — unemployment lines, declining living standards, entire industries in trouble, whopping foreign trade deficits. Small wonder there's so much attention being focused on ways to reindustrialize America and get our economy back on a growth track. "Even the trendy set in economic policy has sensed that something is wrong in the American econo-

my," says one economist.

One of the main things wrong is the stunting of productivity. Productivity, or output per employee, is a key measure of economic health. When productivity grows, so does the economy in real terms, raising people's living standards. When it declines, real economic growth slows and stagnates. Increased productivity also yields resources to meet public needs, such as reducing poverty and improving environmental quality.

America traditionally has led the world in overall productivity. It still does. But other countries are catching up. If current trends continue, Japan and West Germany can be expected to surpass us during this decade. Among the non-communist industrialized nations, the U.S. lags at the bottom in productivity growth. The grim results are higher prices, unemployment, lower real pay, and a blunting of U.S. com-

petitiveness in world markets.

American productivity actually declined in 1979 for only the second time in the last three decades. It grew at about 3% a year during the 1950s and

1960s, then slumped to less than half that rate during the '70s. Had we maintained the 3% rate during the last decade, real U.S. output would now be about \$400 billion higher. Personal income would be up about \$4,000 per household.

Raising productivity doesn't mean working harder. It means working smarter. And this demands large doses of the twin I's — investment and innovation.

More money has to be channeled into capital investment for the modern plants and machines that enable people to work more efficiently and productively. Research and development must be stepped up in the quest for new technologies and innovative ways of doing

things.

Whatever has happened to Yankee ingenuity, anyway? The number of U.S. patents issued to Americans has fallen 25% since 1971 while the number issued to foreigners has risen 14%. About 40% of the patents now issued by the U.S. go to people from other countries. America's most formidable foreign competitors, Japan and West Germany, outperform us both in capital investment and research and development measured as a percentage of total national output.

The reindustrialization of America must start with recognition that invigorating our productivity is a top imperative.

Policies and programs are needed to expand saving and investment, stimulate technological advances, enhance the climate for risk-taking and innovation, encourage adequate corporate profits, and ease the tax and regulatory burdens that undercut business' ability to create, compete, and produce.

Nothing less than a rebuilding of the nation's productive might is required if America is to regain its economic health.



nificantly reduced. The *Times*'s thirty-six-page Weekend section on September 26, for instance, was reduced to six pages in the national edition, thus eliminating many features and reviews. "*The New York Times* is now at most the *Times*," says Charles Miller, an associate professor at Lake Forest College and a co-founder of the *Times* restoration committee. "It is not New York."

Allan M. Siegal, editor of the new edition, concedes he has received complaints about "almost everything" regarding the Midwest paper, but adds, "There's a limit to the amount of stuff we can afford [to run]," especially given the smaller amount of advertising in the paper. Editing the national edition, he says, is a matter of "swallowing hard and doing the things we think matter to people outside New York." As it is, he points out, the national paper includes at least 85 percent, and sometimes more, of the news in the New York edition.

Complaints aside, the *Times* is pleased with the new paper's performance thus far. In addition to a 35 percent increase in its press run to meet increased demand since the paper debuted in August, advertising revenues are growing weekly with minimal promotion, according to Leonard Harris, director of corporate relations. Furthermore, says Harris, the initial wave of criticism seems to be abating.

The *Times* is closely monitoring reader reaction. While the paper is mute about the possibility of making the new edition truly national by printing the paper in regions other than the Midwest, Harris does say, "We know it's the easiest thing in the world to do when demand comes. The same [satellite] signal that's bounced down in Chicago could be bounced down in San Diego, Denver, Los Angeles. . . . "

But the Times's optimism is tempered by memory of its misbegotten experiment in the early 1960s with a western edition, printed in Los Angeles, that died after fifteen months of distinct noninterest on the part of both readers and advertisers. So management is waiting to see how many readers continue to agree with Roger Ebert, who wrote in his Sun-Times column that, "by substituting a truncated national edition for economy reasons, the Times may be undercutting its basic national selling point: that it was a New York edition of a New York paper." The Times is betting that most potential readers are not so New York-oriented. As for transplanted New Yorkers, jokes Leonard Harris, "If they're that interested, let them move Don McLeese

Don McLeese is a free-lance writer living in Chicago.

#### From green cards to pink slips

On October 23, editorial employees of the Paterson *News* and of the Hudson *Dispatch* of Union City, two New Jersey papers owned by Texas millionaire Joe Allbritton, filed for an election with the International Typographical Union. On October 24, ten of the two papers' ninety employees, including four of the seven members of the union organizing committee, were "laid off." The papers' joint management claims the layoffs had been planned weeks in advance for budgetary reasons, but to staff members the timing seemed to be much more than coincidence.

Soon after being laid off — or, as they see it, fired — some of the employees filed charges of unfair labor practices ("union busting," in common parlance) with the National Labor Relations Board in Newark. Organizing efforts at the papers were no secret, and over half the editorial employees had

signed green cards requesting an election. In fact, as the organizing drive gained momentum in the month preceding the layoffs, several reporters received warnings to stop their union activities — warnings that ranged from simple admonitions to threats that the editor "had firing power and would use it."

John Buzzetta, publisher of the News, cays that staff reductions had been in the offing since September, when a reduced budget was submitted to Allbritton Communications's offices in Washington. The reductions were required, he says, because of a loss in advertising and a company decision to kill the News's afternoon edition and continue only with the morning edition. The budget was approved on October 20, Buzzetta adds, with directions that staff layoffs take place immediately; they began, in fact, four days later, the day after employees filed for the union election.



#### Stop the presses!

In the first such action at an American paper in recent memory, production workers at the New York Daily News stopped the presses to protest the running of the above cartoon. The September 16, 1980, evening edition of the paper was delayed seventy-five minutes by some 100 members of the Printing Pressmen's Union Local No. 2, who viewed the cartoon as, in the words of local vice president Richard Siemers, a "personal insult and a slap in the face" to unionized workers. The drawing, by syndicated cartoonist Don Wright, appeared in many papers nationwide without incident — a testimony, perhaps, to the strength of the union at the Daily News. For its part, the paper's management, especially angered that the stoppage caused the edition to miss the lucrative rush hour business, threatened to dock the workers' pay for the time lost — with an eye, no doubt, to discouraging any future manifestations of political enthusiasm — but as of early December no action had been taken.

L.C.

#### 'On being laid off, the reporter was informed that his work at the paper was regarded as "controversial"

Richard Vezza, executive editor for both the News (circulation: 55,000) and Dispatch (41,000), says he was unaware that any union activity had been going on at the papers. The decision on who should be dismissed, he says, was based on "attitude, ability, and the people who best fit with the direction I wanted the paper to go." One who apparently failed to meet those criteria was a senior News reporter who had won several awards from the New Jersey Press Association. He had also been a member of the News's union organizing committee. On being laid off, the reporter was informed that his work at the paper was regarded as "controversial."

In addition to the *News* and *Dispatch*, Allbritton Communications owns three other small papers as well as three television stations, including a major outlet in Washington, D.C. (Allbritton made headlines in 1978)

when he sold The Washington Star to Time Inc. after a rigorous cost-cutting program.) The papers have had a rich history of labor problems. In September 1979, the editorial staff at the Amherst (Massachusetts) Morning Record began negotiating a union contract — its first since Allbritton refused to recognize one in effect at the time he bought the paper in October 1978. Last April, most of the staff was laid off and the daily converted into a shopper. (Eight of the former employees have since started their own paper, The Amherst News, and are running it as a workers' cooperative.) Meanwhile, the Westfield (Massachusetts) Evening News is being sued by former employees who claim the paper owes them more than \$40,000 in back pay. They charge that the paper forced them to falsify time cards to indicate they had worked only forty hours a week, even though their assignments often required many more hours to complete.

Allbritton's two New Jersey papers have cracked down on overtime pay as well. Reporters at the *News* and *Dispatch* have been told that they will be paid for working more than forty hours a week only with the prior approval of an editor. That policy has only contributed further to a plunge in staff morale. "There's simply no way I can get all my assignments done in a forty-hour week," says a reporter at one of the papers.

Unionization efforts, meanwhile, continue, and members of the organizing committee, who hope to hold elections early this year, say the October layoffs have only strengthened pro-union sentiment at the two papers.

Doug Hand

Doug Hand is a free-lance writer living in New York.

#### When the legal drinking age goes accidents down. go up? It's a question a lot of Write or call (309-662people have been arguing. 2625) if you have an interest And State Farm's Insurance in these topics or questions Backgrounder on the subabout others. ject presents the evidence on both sides. Media Information Service Other Backgrounders **Public Relations Department** take objective looks at top-State Farm Insurance Companies ics like "The 55 MPH Speed Limit: Lifesaver or Nui-sance?" and "Air Bags One State Farm Plaza Bloomington, IL 61701 Needed or Not?" They're part of the information service available to newspeople from State Farm.

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#### Juvenile journalism

Scholastic Magazines, the nation's largest publisher of student newsmagazines (weekly circulation: 10 million) commemorated its sixtieth anniversary last fall with a banquet and a self-congratulatory ad on the back page of *The New York Times*. But even as the celebrating was going on, the New York-based publisher was under fire from civil rights groups for an article in one of its thirty-three publications that took a distinctly nonchalant view of the Ku Klux Klan.

On April 3, Junior Scholastic, a weekly read by 800,000 junior high school students, featured a cover story on "Kids in the KKK." It was a natural topic for the magazine, which, like others in the publishing group, does not shy away from controversial subjects. But in its effort to provide "evenhanded" coverage, as is its policy, Junior Scholastic went astray.

The cover of the issue showed a blond, blue-eyed child, in robe and hood, standing in front of a Klansman. The accompanying article, which focused on the activities of the Klan Youth Corps in New Jersey, provided a useful description of the Klan's new recruiting effort in the nation's schools. In the process, however, the article, written by associate editor Jeffrey Shear, glossed over the Klan's tradition of violence and intimidation.

Covering the Klan



That aspect of its record was dispensed with in a brief paragraph that set the group's grisly activities firmly in the past:

The KKK is a secretive organization that preaches the superiority of white people over all other races. The burning cross is a part of their secret ritual. In the past, such crosses have been burned on the lawn of black families to frighten them — and to warn them that the Klan could strike their homes. For years, the Klan used its robes and rituals to terrorize people.

Nowhere did the article indicate that the violence continues. No mention was made, for example, of the bloody shootout involving Klan members that occurred in Greensboro, North Carolina, in November 1979. Instead, the piece presented an almost wholesome picture of today's Klan as seen through the eyes of children. One Youth Corps member is quoted as saying, "The Klan talks about the threat of communism. They also talk about the need for tightly-knit families — that's what keeps kids from going astray."

Soon after reaching the nation's class-rooms, the piece drew fire from the Council on Interracial Books for Children, a watch-dog group for teachers, librarians, and parents. The Council's Summer 1980 Bulletin also contained statements of protest from the N.O.W. Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Anti-Defamation League, and the National Anti-Klan Network, among other groups.

Junior Scholastic editor Lee Baier agreed to meet with members of the council in December and to publish a corrective article in February. Aware that a problem existed at the time of publication, Baier had included, on the April 3 contents page, a short backgrounder on Klan violence, but he now concedes that the addition wasn't sufficient to right the balance. "We are deeply disturbed that the main article appears to make the KKK look benign, perhaps even attractive, to young people," says Baier.

The flap over the Klan article reflects to some degree the problem children's newsmagazines can have in covering topical issues in such a way as not to offend parents and educators. On that latter score, at least, the Klan article was a success: Baier received complaints from only three librarians and four teachers.

Joshua E. Mills

Joshua E. Mills is a member of the journalism faculty at New York University.



#### Closed shop in Costa Rica

When Stephen Schmidt, a native New Yorker, impulsively accepted a teaching job in San José, Costa Rica, ten years ago, he never expected to become a journalist, much less the center of a national storm over press freedom. But in recent months he has been making headlines as the target of a lawsuit claiming that, because he lacks membership in the country's journalists' association, his work is illegal. If he loses, Schmidt faces up to two years in jail.

For Schmidt, the case offers the opportunity to contest a law that he sees as vastly inhibiting his and others' freedom of expression. To some Costa Rican journalists, the case is a matter of a foreign journalist seeking to undermine a national law. More generally, the suit provides some insight into the inner workings of a state-sanctioned organization that, in effect, licenses journalists — a type of organization that is proliferating in Latin America and whose merits have been heatedly discussed during UNESCO's debates on world information flow.

Schmidt, who is thirty-two years old, has long been a contributor to the English-language *Tico Times* and, more recently, to *La Nación*, the country's most prestigious Spanish-language paper. He has written extensively about fraudulent land development and, in the process, earned a reputation as a tenacious investigative reporter.

Though never actually prevented from writing, Schmidt, who is now a Costa Rica resident, has found his status subject to repeated questioning as a result of a 1969 law that requires all journalists (local or foreign) who write for Costa Rican publications to be-



Facing a threatening deadline: Stephen Schmidt in the Tico Times newsroom

long to a Colegio de Periodistas, or Journalists' Association. The sponsors of the law sought to establish something of a journalists' equivalent to the bar, an organization that would elevate the status of the profession (which, as in much of Latin America, is relatively low) by setting performance standards. But, rather than relying on exams or other formal measures of competence, the law requires, as the basic condition of colegio membership, graduation from the public University of Costa Rica's journalism school, the country's only such school in 1969.

But, by the late 1970s, a newly established private university in San José began offering a graduate program in journalism, and Schmidt, encouraged by executives of the colegio itself, enrolled in it with an eve to at last putting to rest any questions about his credentials. After his class graduated, however, the association withheld recognition of their degrees. Schmidt's frustration about the uncertainty of his status grew, until it finally boiled over at a meeting of the Inter-American Press Association held in San José last March. At a debate on the value of licensing journalists in Latin America, Schmidt stood up and startled his colleagues by announcing, "I am practicing journalism illegally and will continue to do so. What are you going to do about it?"

The colegio took up the challenge by bringing suit against Schmidt. An official statement from the organization asserted, "It's a simple case of a foreigner — note well, a foreigner — who, by boasting of violating Costa Rican laws in an international meeting, edged toward martyrdom

with a dramatic appeal to an individual's right to free expression in order to mount a perfectly synchronized international campaign with well-orchestrated fanfare." The colegio explains its refusal to grant Schmidt admission by explaining that his eighteenmonth postgraduate course did not measure up to the University of Costa Rica's five-year program. Such inadequately prepared journalists, the colegio claims, pose a threat to the public; permitting just anyone to report the news "is like letting a pharmacy clerk prescribe medication or putting a scalpel in the hands of a butcher." Now Schmidt has sought to mobilize opinion both inside Costa Rica and out in his effort to contest the law, questioning whether the colegio is interested in protecting the public or the jobs of its more than 300 members.

It is paradoxical that Schmidt's case has surfaced in Costa Rica, one of the few Latin American countries that have a free press. The colegio denies that its suit is inconsistent with press freedom, since under the law Schmidt can write columns and guest editorials; he just can't report. But, to a working journalist like Schmidt, of course, such a restriction is equivalent to a muzzle. The colegio, says Guido Fernandez, former editor of La Nación and now director of the jour-

nalism program at San José's private university, is "dangerous nonsense" that "restricts journalists' freedom."

The colegio itself, on the other hand, sees itself as "the wave of the future," in the words of spokesman Carlos Morales. "The whole Western world, except the U.S., will have a colegio because of the inexorable role history is taking toward state intervention for [public] . . protection." But if the experience in Costa Rica is any guide, membership bodies in tight employment markets can easily become guild-type units interested primarily in job security.

For Schmidt, of course, the case has its improbable aspects. In 1976, he was the focus of a landmark ruling by the Supreme Court of Costa Rica that, in the course of acquitting him of libel and slander charges, specified that a reporter not only has the right but the duty to inform the public. "It's ironic," he says, "that the other journalists are attacking me now when they were embarrassingly silent while I was defending — no, expanding — their rights."

Joanne Kenen and Lezak Shallat

Joanne Kenen is a free-lance writer, and Lezak Shallat is a staff writer for The Tico Times, in San José, Costa Rica.

#### QUEENSLAND INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

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The Institute is located in Brisbane, a city of one million with a climate similar to that of Southern California.

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Applications quoting JR/137, together with full details and telephone number and the names of two referees should reach the Personnel Officer, Q.I.T., George Street, Brisbane, Q., 4000, by Friday, February 20th, 1981.

#### **PUBLISHER'S NOTES**

### Who are *CJR* readers?

Of the 32,000 Review subscribers, approximately three-quarters (73 percent) are employed in journalism or some related field of communications.

That is among the findings of a justcompleted sampling of CJR subscribers by the respected survey firm of Erdos and Morgan.

The survey indicates that 35 percent (11,200) work for newspapers, 13 percent (4,160) work in radio and television news, 10 percent (3,200) work for magazines, 3 percent (960) work for news services, 4 percent (1,280) teach journalism, and 11 percent (3,520) are freelance writers. Nonjournalistic readers include 1,600 educators (5 percent of total), 960 lawyers (3 percent) and 1,600 retired persons (5 percent).

These figures do not include approximately 2,500 newsstand buyers and 44,800 who read someone else's copy. Of the respondents who are not in journalism or communications, more than half (53 percent) say they occasionally write for publication and exactly half say they give speeches from time to time.

Of the subscribers surveyed, 89 percent say they read their magazine wholly or partly at home, 22 percent read it wholly or partly at work, and 8 percent read it in transit or elsewhere. (Some obviously carry it around and read it in more than one place.) The median length of time devoted to an issue is 1.9 hours. Nearly half (48 percent) say they keep their copies for a year or longer.

The median age of subscribers is 35.6; the median household income is \$29,472. Approximately 82 percent are college graduates, while 98 percent attended college and 34 percent have graduate degrees.

Seventy-two percent of the *Review*'s subscribers are male; 28 percent are female — figures that naturally give us pause.

#### **Advertising standards**

In the "Unfinished Business" department a concerned reader argues cogently that the *Review* should reject an ad with which both he and we disagree. We don't do so simply because to screen ads in accordance with our own likes and dislikes would negate the principle of free speech.

At the same time, the *Review* insists that advertising be unmistakably differentiated from editorial matter — if necessary by the use of an "Advertisement" slug. We recently gave up some twelve pages of ads because a major advertiser disagreed with us about the need for such identification.

#### **Dime-store** pastor

The writers of those occasional "Dear Sir: You cur" letters will kindly show greater respect toward the undersigned, who has just been ordained, as attested by the following:



My new status cost me \$3, sent in response to an ad in a magazine. The Mother Earth Church will also provide an "honorary Doctor of Divinity" degree for \$18. I'm also being ordained in the Universal Life Church, Inc. for a \$10 "offering" and can become a bishop for \$75. I haven't qualified yet for ordination in the Church of World Peace (\$10), where I can become a bishop for a bargain-rate \$20.

All three of these incredible "churches" provide literature on the po-

tential tax benefits and other rewards of ordination.

All three "churches" advertised their offerings in the classified section of that enterprising magazine *Mother Jones*. Question: Quite apart from free speech, how do *Mother Jones* and a few other magazines, including *Rolling Stone* and *Inquiry*, justify participation in peddling spurious unearned credentials?

This spurious clergyman is tempted to preach his first sermon on the subject.

#### Journalist's burden

In a recent talk to journalism graduate students, our colleague Dean Osborn Elliott said some things that seem worth repeating:

"There are many interesting and useful and honorable occupations in this world — but journalism is almost unique in the burdens it imposes on its practitioners. An old boss of mine, Philip Graham, once called journalism a 'precariously intellectual profession.'

"Yours will be the task to decide what is truly important in all the varied fields you cover; yours the task to probe for that maddeningly elusive quarry we call the truth. . . . Will you simply parrot whatever seems to be the current vogue, and thus assure yourselves of a continuing audience and a continuing job? Or will you have the guts to run the risk of alienating readers, and making bosses uncomfortable, by reminding them, continuously, of what is wrong and must be corrected in our society always aware of the fine line that separates unhealthy cynicism from the skepticism that is so essential to a journalist's

"Practiced imperfectly, as it too often is, journalism can be too bland — or too raucous. Practiced as it should be, with excitement and innovation and boldness, journalism can provide both the glue that holds our society together, and the lubricant that makes it work."

E.W.B.

## **HOW TO FOIL A CAR THIEF**

A FEW SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF THEFT

The numbers are staggering. Every 37 seconds or so a car is stolen somewhere in the U.S. That adds up to almost 800,000 cars a year. But you can do something to keep your car from becoming a statistic. Start by avoiding these four common parking mistakes.

The "Just for a Minute" Syndrome. When you leave your car, even if it's "just for a minute," lock all of the doors and take your keys. In fact, about one of every five cars stolen was left unattended with kevs in the ignition. Keep driver's license and vehicle registration cards in your wallet or purse. If a car thief finds these documents in the vehicle's glove box, he can impersonate you if stopped by the police.

The Isolated Location. It's safest to park in a locked garage, but if you can't, don't leave your car in a dark, out-of-the-way spot. Instead, try to park on a busy, well-lighted street. Thieves shy away from tampering with a car if there's a high risk of being spotted.

The Display Case. There's nothing more inviting to a thief than expensive items lying in your car, in plain sight. If you lock these items in the trunk or glove box, there's less incentive for a thief to break in. Also, when you park in a commercial lot or garage, be cautious. Lock your valuables in the trunk, and leave only the ignition key with the attendant.

The Space at the End of the Block. In recent years, professional car-theft operations have become an increasing problem. Unlike amateurs, the professionals are not easily deterred. Cars parked at the end of a block are easy targets for the pro-

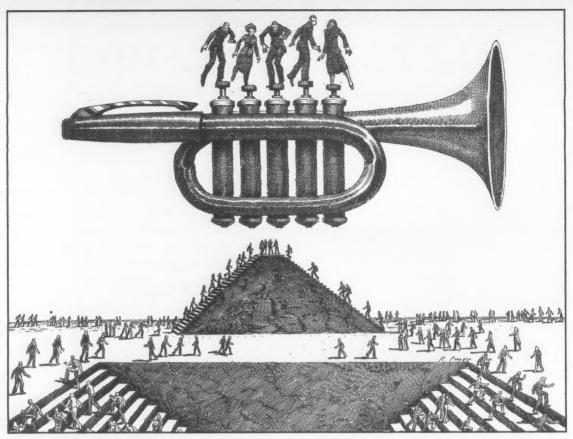
fessional thief with a tow truck. So, it's best to park in the middle of the block. Be sure to turn your steering wheel sharply to one side or the other. That will lock the steering column and prevent the car from being towed from the rear.

Unfortunately, there's no such thing as a "theft-proof" car. But at General Motors, we're equipping every car we build with antitheft features. We want to help you make it as difficult as possible for any thief—amateur or professional—to steal your car.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

#### **General Motors**

People building transportation to serve people



Hispanics in the United States number 18 million or more, 1 in 12 of all Americans. In some communities they are the majority.

lated into proportionate civic and community participation. The result is inequity in job opportunities, education, fair treatment under the law and sharing of public funds.

This deprives the individuals of their full measure of freedom and the communities of their fullness of life.

Gannett newspapers and broadcast stations are working hard to do something about that.

The Nevada State Journal and Reno Evening Gazette described abuses in jobs, education and housing suffered by Northern Nevada's large

but largely ignored Hispanic population. By focusing on the struggles of individual Hispanics pursuing their American dream, the series of articles clarified needed community remedies.

An El Paso Times series offered readers a close inspection of the problems Mexican-Americans face in their daily lives within the unique border community.

KBTV in Denver scheduled publicservice spot announcements in all parts of its broadcast day, urging Hispanics to cooperate fully with the 1980 census. Hispanics make up an estimated one-fourth of the Colorado population.

In San Bernardino, California, The Yet these numbers have not trans- Sun opened a news bureau in the heart of the Hispanic and Black West Side. A vibrant, active community is now better known to all area residents. The Sun also added a columnist who writes exclusively about Hispanic political activities.

KPNX-TV in Phoenix airs a weekly public-affairs program concentrating on Hispanic needs and events.

To better serve the entire community, the Tucson Citizen in Arizona offers free Spanish lessons to every staff member.

And Gannett and Michigan State University have launched a large-scale study of communication behavior and attitudes of Hispanic-Americans. The study will help newspaper and broadcast professionals serve the audience according to its needs and preferences.

In these ways and others, Gannett members strive to serve all segments of their communities, each according to its own special needs.

At Gannett, we have a commitment to freedom in every business we are in, whether it is newspaper, TV, radio, outdoor advertising, film production, magazine or public opinion research.

That freedom rings throughout Gannett, from Tucson to Tarrytown, from Salinas to Santa Fe, from Visalia to the Virgin Islands, in news coverage, in editorial opinions, in community service, each member serving its own audience in its own way.

For more information, write: Gannett, Lincoln Tower, Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Or call (716) 546-8600.



A WORLD OF DIFFERENT VOICES WHERE FREEDOM SPEAKS

## COMMENT

#### The press's own war games

In this issue's lead article, author Fred Kaplan examines press coverage of Presidential Directive 59 and the concept of limited nuclear war formalized in President Carter's directive. Along the way, Kaplan observes that many defense reporters, in the process of becoming explicators of Pentagon strategy, seem to forget about the "real world of nuclear warfare - its messy uncertainties, things going wrong, tens of millions of people dying, whole societies obliterated." Newsweek provided a typical example of this euphemistic approach in its October 27 cover story, "Is America Strong Enough?" writing: "In strategic terms, many [sober military sources] say, the United States could probably absorb the blitz of a nuclear first strike and still inflict 'unacceptable' damage on the Soviet Union." Picking up the jargon of the strategists in this fashion, reporters sanitize war: missiles are launched, targets hit, blitzes absorbed — and presumably those forgettable creatures, people, go right on reading their newspapers and newsweeklies and watching the evening news. Certainly nothing bad ever happens to them in most stories dealing with nuclear strategy and weaponry. That belongs to another beat, is "another story."

eaders of The New York Times, for instance, were told a good deal about PD-59 and the "new strategy" of limited nuclear war in a pair of articles by defense reporter Richard Burt that appeared in early August - on page 1 and on page 3. Times readers would have to wait until September 27 (and turn to page 27) to gain some sense of the effects of nuclear war on people. Headlined SCIENTISTS SAY NUCLEAR BLAST IN CITY WOULD KILL 2 MILLION, this account, written by science reporter Richard Severo, dealt with a conference organized by Physicians for Social Responsibility in collaboration with the Council for a Livable World Education Fund. There, several prominent speakers, including Dr. Howard Hiatt, dean of Harvard's school of public health, and George Kistiakowsky, science adviser to Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson, described the probable damage that would be wreaked on New York City by the explosion of a single one-megaton nuclear warhead. (The explosive force of Soviet warheads, Severo noted, ranges up to 50 megatons.) Apart from the 2.25 million people who would be immediately killed, another 3.6 million would be seriously injured, the speakers said. Meanwhile, all forms of animal life - right down to the hardy cockroach - would be blinded.

Defense reporters might be expected to dismiss such details as having no bearing on the subject of *limited* nuclear

war - in which, for a time at least, military targets would be "pinpointed" and cities spared. But we fail to grasp why these journalists could not refer, at least in passing, to the casualties to be expected in the event of one or another of the limited forms of nuclear war plotted by the Pentagon's scenario writers. These figures aren't all that hard to come by; although, as Kaplan explains, the Pentagon has had trouble calculating death tolls involving American citizens, the federal Office of Technology Assessment can do the necessary arithmetic. Meanwhile, we wonder why defense reporters all but ignore the position, held by such groups as Physicians for Social Responsibility, that there can be no clear distinction between limited nuclear war and all-out nuclear war - a distinction which, as Kaplan points out, the Pentagon has marketed for self-serving reasons and which the press, by and large, has bought. The Pentagon's limited nuclear war scenarios assume that the nations involved will abide by some quasi-rational guidelines; but as even Henry Kissinger pointed out in 1965: "No one knows how governments or people will react to a nuclear explosion under conditions where both sides possess vast arsenals."

There are, of course, "good" journalistic reasons for excluding from Pentagon-sourced stories all mention of the loss of human lives, not to mention the lasting damage to the environment and to the human species, that might result from a "nuclear exchange" - to use another sanitizing phrase. The exclusion policy keeps the story focused and relatively short — and, anyway, the casualty and damage story would inevitably become a constant downbeat refrain. Further, mentioning the cost in human lives might impair a reporter's relations with hardline sources in the Pentagon. Nevertheless, we urge editors to see to it that strategy stories are placed in a context that includes the probable consequences — in terms of human lives and suffering — of any given strategy. Not to do so, it seems to us, is to lull the public into accepting nuclear war as something we, and our children, and our children's children can live with.

#### Q.E.D.

In a speech last October, presidential candidate Barry Commoner wittily and persuasively analyzed the shortcomings of the press in its campaign coverage. His talk, an adaptation of which appears on page 30, was delivered at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, and before Commoner's session with the students was over, a reporter for WABC-TV in New York provided a striking confirmation of the validity of one of his principal complaints. The complaint was that when the news media bothered to cover Commoner's own run for the presidency

(which they rarely did), they were more interested in his style as a campaigner than in anything he had to say about energy or nuclear proliferation or the economy.

By way of illustration, Commoner pointed ironically to the success of an unconventional device his advisers had hit on to attract attention to his candidacy. This was the use in a radio commercial of a word that Commoner refrained from pronouncing in his Columbia talk, but which he said had been referred to by some newspapers as a "barnyard epithet." In the question period that followed, the WABC-TV reporter asked why he had avoided the word in his speech. Commoner replied that, given sixty minutes in which to express his views, he had felt no need to use an attention-grabbing device more appropriate to a sixty-second commercial. The reporter then asked archly what one word Commoner would use to describe the *New York Post*'s endorsement of Ronald Reagan. Commoner, refusing to take the bait, asked the reporter if he didn't have some

substantive questions to ask. None was forthcoming.

Viewers of WABC-TV's "Eyewitness News" that evening saw and heard part of this exchange, and were given a close-up of a dictionary page on which the word "bullshit" was defined. They learned nothing about what Commoner had said at Columbia — only about what he hadn't said. Commoner could hardly have asked for better proof of how the news media can trivialize the business of politics.

## Mad dogs, unruly Swiss, and sun-crazed Mesopotamians

The New Yorker had some good fun at the expense of The New York Times last fall. In its October 20 "Notes and Comment" section it briskly took apart a front-page Times article headlined UNRULY YOUTHS SHATTER SWISS IMAGE. "Because it treated the fortunes of an image as a hard-news

#### Darts and laurels

Dart: to the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Journal-Gazette. Outlining in an October 19 editorial endorsement the many good reasons why John Walda should be sent to Congress instead of his rival, the paper omitted one of no small consequence: Walda is married to the publisher's daughter.

Laurel: to the Lewiston Morning Tribune and reporter Allen Short, for a five-part diagnosis (beginning August 3) of Idaho's sick \$26-million nursing home industry. Reporting a syndrome of fraudulent claims, patient neglect, druglaw abuse, and manipulative real estate transactions — aggravated by favorable state regulations that have made the industry a tax haven for out-of-state investors — the series resulted in a prescription for reform that is given an even chance of pulling through in Idaho's upcoming legislative session.

Dart: to Bob Ritzert, news director for WNAB, Bridgeport, Connecticut, for an unresolved identity crisis. Ritzert moonlights as a press aide to the city's mayor.

Laurel: to Marian Burros, food editor of *The Washington Post*. Her delicious assortment of wry tidbits from the Newspaper Food Editors Conference (October 23) gave readers a rare taste of the promotional spread the food companies lay on at this annual event. (Items: meat consumption recommended by the National Livestock and Meat Board; the egg-cholesterol relationship denied by the American Egg Board; food additive risks dismissed by McCormick & Company; food labeling legislation lobbied against by the National Food Processors Association.)

Dart: to The Country Gentleman, for a low bow to the bottom line. A recent letter from Gent's ad director to a national environmental group hinted that the group might receive favorable notice in the Curtis publication's columns, but explained that it is the magazine's policy "to require 70 lines of paid advertising before granting editorial support."

Laurel: to the Hot Springs, Arkansas, Sentinel-Record,

for "Children of Poverty in the Land of Opportunity," a thirty-two-page special section (October 11) on the tragic plight of the nearly 40 percent of the state's residents who are caught in the vortex of poverty. With its graphic glimpse of the "drought-like condition of the spirit" in which tens of thousands of the state's children daily struggle to survive, its stunning statistics (for example, some 35 percent never finish high school), and its straight talk about the politics, prejudice, and economics of it all, the study makes a powerful appeal for strong social commitment to breaking the "cycle of despair."

Dart: to Sixty Minutes, for an October 5 segment on the rebuilding of Beirut that featured an ear-catching plug for E. F. Hutton, the investment company — whose regular commercial immediately followed. "When the Lebanese start talking to each other, the man from E. F. Hutton listens," ran Morley Safer's lead-in to a self-promoting speech by the company's man in Beirut.

Laurel: to the Buffalo, New York, Courier-Express and undercover reporter Mike Billington, for the ten-part series (October 12-19), "Oasis of Hate." Following up a classified ad inviting "quality Christian patriots" to come to a five-day Louisville, Illinois, "freedom festival" and learn how to save the country (no Jews or blacks allowed), Billington discovered on the grounds of the Christian Conservative Churches of America a conclave of rabid right-wingers trading virulent literature, bizarre weapons, and advice on how to make a bomb as well as how to slit a throat.

Laurel: to The Charleston Gazette and investigative reporter James A. Haught, for an intermittent series (June through September) on newspapering in West Virginia. The report documented instances of inflated circulation claims; of the suppression of stories unflattering to advertisers, to favored office-holders, and to prominent local citizens; and

item," The New Yorker commented, "the Times headline marked a new advance in the rise of public-relations thinking." The Comment piece went on to suggest that the prominent play given this story by our nation's leading daily might be as damaging to the Swiss image — one of calm and sanity in a chaotic world — as those rioting youths allegedly had been, so that, logically, the paper should follow up with a second article, headlined NEW YORK TIMES FURTHER SHATTERS SWISS IMAGE, and beginning: "Unruly New York Times editors and reporters dealt a severe second blow to Switzerland's image today."

The *Times* deserved this criticism. But perhaps *The New Yorker*, too, has had trouble in dealing with other people's images? A "Letter from Baghdad," written by Joseph Kraft, appeared in the same October 20 issue as the frisky Comment piece. Kraft ended his lengthy Letter with a quotation from a book by an Austrian historian, Egon Friedell. In increasingly vivid prose, Friedell describes how very hot

of the not uncommon ruse of printing identical editions under "Republican" and "Democrat" banners to meet state requirements that legal ads be placed in papers of both political persuasions. Also included: an explanation of the monopolistic abuses inherent in the joint operating agreement between the Gazette and The Charleston Daily Mail.

Dart: to the Kalamazoo, Michigan, Gazette, for a curious difference between reports in the first and second editions (September 26) on the trial of ten people arrested at a Western Michigan University's board of trustees meeting last year, at which the defendants were protesting the school's investments in companies doing business with South Africa. The first-edition report, headlined UPJOHN'S BUSINESS IN SOUTH AFRICA BECOMES ISSUE IN TRIAL OF 10, focused on the testimony of board chairman Mrs. Maury Parfet and her views on the South African operations of the Upjohn Company, one of Kalamazoo's major industries. By the time the Gazette's second-edition story rolled out with its new headline, INJUSTICE, FREEDOM OF SPEECH VIEWED AS DEFENSE IN TRIAL OF 10, the four leading paragraphs on Upjohn had disappeared, and had been replaced by a brief reference in the middle of the story: "[Board chairman Parfet] testified it is OK that she has Upjohn stock and her husband is an Upjohn employee."

Laurel: to NBC's Buyline and Betty Furness, for an October 11 program on the dangers of products for children—toddler gyms that strangulate, medicines that produce third-degree burns, formulas that cause kidney damage, space toys that kill, bottles that break in a baby's hand. Naming manufacturers, describing specific injuries, and making it clear where she stood on the need for government regulation to protect children, Furness delivered a tough, incisive report that represented consumer reporting at its very best (as well as, perhaps, at its very last: shortly afterward, the network permanently dropped her show).

it is in Iraq ("During the summer months you have twelve hours of burning heat with temperatures of forty, fifty, or even sixty degrees Centigrade. . . . Mesopotamia is hell. A yellowish, corpse-like color lies over the hills and plains . . ."). Then Friedell — and Kraft with him — concludes: "Small wonder that this country has always been the breeding ground for something considerably surpassing that which is commonly human — a certain madness."

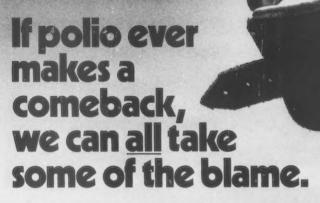
Living in the temperate zone — and thus, of course, innately coolheaded — we detect beneath all that Austrian pomp a rather ugly ethnocentric cliché, shattering for the moment our image of *The New Yorker*.

#### **Unclassy actions**

In the May/June issue, the *Review* published an advanced quiz for journalists designed to raise the level of awareness of sexism in newswriting — not your usual GRANDMOTHER WINS NOBEL PRIZE sort of stuff, but examples whose sexist bias was so subtle, whose sexist assumptions were so unconscious, that CJR editors who took the quiz, men and woman alike, were in some cases hard put to see how the writer had sinned. In striking contrast, the article on page 7 of the current *Review* reports on a situation involving the use by journalists of sexist language of the most blatant and assaultive kind. The fact that it was used in the newsroom of *The Minneapolis Star*, a respected paper that prides itself on its social consciousness and its ethical standards, only serves to underscore the stubbornness of the problem.

one of this is news to newspaper women, of course, the more assertive — and more organized — of whom have gone to law to compel more equal treatment by their employers. In November, for example, The Washington Post joined the exclusive but growing fraternity of media organizations - including The New York Times, Reader's Digest, Newsweek, and NBC — which, backs to the wall, have finally settled class actions charging them with discrimination against women. But while such moral and practical victories go well beyond the particular newsroom involved and give women journalists everywhere a psychological lift, they offer little real and immediate relief to the thousands of women in ordinary newsrooms who deal with insult and injustice every working day. Nor, for that matter, do the legal triumphs do much even for those who have made it in the business: as a recent article in Savvy magazine points out, women stars on the now co-ed press bus are far from immune from sexist sniping, ridicule, name calling, and the antediluvian criticisms of a bureau chief who thinks the press-bus assignment unsuitable for a menstruating woman.

Undeniably, even at this late stage of journalism's social development, sexism remains firmly entrenched at every level — in the copy, in the newsroom, in the front office, on the road. For professionals who put fairness as their highest goal, that's not something to write home about.

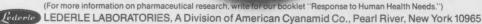


Right now, millions of our kids are not immunized against childhood's most dreaded diseases. Example: 19 million kids are at risk of becoming polio cripples.

What happened? In 1962, the biggest news in health care was the development of the Sabin oral vaccine for each of three poliovirus strains. In most of the world it replaced Salk vaccine, the first polio preventative (administered by injection). In 1963, after investing 16 years in polio research, Lederle Laboratories made mass immunization simple and practical by combining all three Sabin vaccines into a single oral vaccine. Soon, polio was on its way out.

Unfortunately, once the disease was under control, people stopped worrying about it - the general public, the press, the medical profession. We all relaxed our vigilance. So now we have work to do.

Let's work together. The drug industry has the vaccines. Physicians are ready to use them. But public health has always been a job for the community as a whole. No profession has shown more effectiveness in mobilizing community action than the news media - in the past, and right now.







# Going native without a field map

The press plunges into limited nuclear war

by FRED KAPLAN

ever before has it been quite so much fun to be a defense correspondent. The Russian Threat, draft registration, predictions of missile gaps, regional wars — all this may make for a livelier workweek, but none of it is really novel. What is new, what makes this phase of the arms race so much more thrilling to cover, what has radically changed the face of standard national-security reporting, is the American news media's Marco Polo journey to a strange, previously unexplored land.

Fred Kaplan has written about defense issues for Scientific American, The New York Times Magazine, and other publications. He is at work on a book about the nuclear strategists.

For many, the beguiling voyage began in 1977, with detailed coverage of the debate over the SALT II arms control treaty. Until then, covering defense was just another beat. Particularly with the rise of "investigative journalism" in the early 1970s, the Pentagon press hound spent many a day exploring cost overruns, weapons that didn't work, and other tidbits of malfeasance. But with SALT II, the defense reporter found himself entering a new and fascinating world — a world of nuclear exchanges, kill-probabilities, counterforce targeting, ICBM vulnerability, limited options, warfighting scenarios: in short, the world of nuclear strategy and the Defense Intellectual.

He began seeing himself as explicator of strategy, sur-



rounded himself with strategic analysts, felt important in their presence, tried learning their language, perhaps even attended some of their conferences. The real world of nuclear warfare — its messy uncertainties, things going wrong, tens of millions of people dying, whole societies obliterated — receded before the alluring elegance of theoretical nuclear-exchange models, ICBM-vulnerability calculations, and abstract tit-for-tat chessgames.

Inevitably, the defense reporter began to lose a certain skepticism and to adopt an entirely different standard of "objective" reporting, measured on a scale established by Pentagon analysts, while rejecting any other yardstick as warped and (worst sin of all) unserious.

In short, the defense reporter had fallen prey to the Going Native Syndrome.

How better to explain the quite miserable job done by most of the national-security press corps in covering the latest episode in the saga of limited-nuclear-war doctrine—President Jimmy Carter's July 25 signing of Presidential Directive (PD) No. 59?

irst word of the "new" strategy came from *The Boston Globe*'s William Beecher, when he reported on July 27, 1980, that the Carter administration had decided to "de-emphasize the threat to smash Russian cities" in retaliation against possible Soviet nuclear attack — the strategy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) — and would instead "stress . . . systematically destroying Soviet military forces, Soviet leaders in their concrete bomb shelters throughout the country, and key factories outside major cities."

South of the Charles River, nobody knew of this development, so the world whistled merrily along until ten days later, when Richard Burt of *The New York Times* and Michael Getler of *The Washington Post* caught up with Beecher's scoop. Their dispatches of August 6 reported the same putative transformation in U.S. strategy and — something Beecher did not catch — revealed the existence of the top secret document PD-59. Burt's lead noted that this 'new strategy for nuclear war . . . gives priority to attacking military targets in the Soviet Union rather than to destroying cities and industrial complexes.'' Getler's read similarly: 'The new strategy involves placing less emphasis on all-out retaliation against Soviet cities in the event of a Russian attack.''

And so it seemed that the controversial business of ''limited nuclear war'' would once again be making headlines for a while. The issue first cropped up in the early 1960s when Robert McNamara was defense secretary; made big news stories in 1973-74 under James Schlesinger and his ''limited nuclear options''; and staged a brief revival in 1978-79 with Harold Brown's ''countervailing strategy.''

PD-59 provided a fine opportunity for the astute defense correspondent to dig out the old clips and congressional hearings on the debate as it was played out in previous incarnations, to draw contrasts and comparisons, to revive old arguments — in short, to educate the interested reader, especially in an election year that so prominently featured defense policy. The old questions could be re-examined:

Can nuclear war be limited? If the U.S. targets Soviet missile silos, might not the Soviets feel compelled to launch their missiles pre-emptively — to "use them before they lose them" in a serious crisis? If the Soviets do launch a first strike against U.S. missile forces, and if the U.S. strikes back only against Soviet military forces (avoiding their cities), what happens next? How does the war end? How does one side "win"; what does "winning" or "losing" mean? Can one even "fight" a nuclear war in this manner; are the absolutely necessary pinpoint attacks feasible?

Through weeks of persistent coverage, the press only rarely raised such questions, much less explored them. For this time around, we were dealing with a press corps by and large captured and captivated by the rhetoric, the logic, and, ultimately, the acceptability of limited nuclear war. They were, with few exceptions, hardly the types to ask embarrassing questions.

I.F. Stone was among the very few to recall, in the context of PD-59, the controversy of six years earlier over the likely level of fatalities in limited nuclear warfare. In the August 20, 1980, *Village Voice*, the veteran muckraker recalled the following exchange between Senator Stuart Symington and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger in Senate hearings held March 4, 1974:

SYMINGTON: . . . you talk about a 'response to a [Soviet] limited attack on military targets that caused relatively few civilian casualties.' . . . [J]ust what do you mean in numbers . . . ? SCHLESINGER: . . . I am talking here about casualties of 15,000, 20,000, 25,000 — a horrendous event, as we all recognize, but one far better than the alternative.

Six months later, as Stone recalled, Schlesinger presented revised data to the committee, estimating that 800,000 would die promptly, with another 700,000 or so gradually killed by radiation. Several liberal senators didn't buy those figures, either, so they had the congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) recruit a panel of experts to conduct a detailed analysis of the whole issue. The panel's conclusion: if the Soviets just attacked American intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), bomber bases, and submarine pens, without intending to kill a single civilian, two million to twenty-two million Americans would die from fallout and various other nuclear effects.

Even the low end of this estimate — and the Pentagon has, since, officially accepted these figures — far exceeds combined war fatalities in all U.S. history. Whether limited nuclear war could be rationally waged, in this context, remains a very legitimate question, and highly pertinent to PD-59 — and one hardly raised by reporters other than Stone. Nor can they get away by muttering that 1974 was a long time ago. For just last year the OTA released another highly publicized study, *The Effects of Nuclear War*. The conclusion was roughly the same: if the Soviets attacked U.S. strategic nuclear forces in a first strike, about fourteen million Americans would probably die.

#### The Wimp Factor

Poor memory, in other words, could not account for neglect of this aspect of the issue. The Going Native Syndrome does — or actually a subset of the syndrome that might be dubbed the Wimp Factor. Simply drawing attention to the prospect of millions of deaths has increasingly become interpreted as a sign of weakness, the physical inability to stare straight into the hellish whirlwind of the fireball, lack of resolve, lack of cool, lack of manhood.

Succumbing to the Wimp Factor, however, should not utterly preclude a critical attitude. Death and destruction are not the only reasons for being less than sanguine about the prospects of fighting and winning a nuclear war. The idea of limited nuclear war, at least in its most popular version, is to destroy the other side's missile silos (and, if possible, other nuclear weapons) if he tries — or seems about to try — to do the same to you first. Missile silos are small and hardened with concrete to resist the heavy overpressures of blast. Since the shock wave of an explosion dissipates with distance, it takes very accurate missiles to destroy these targets; given the explosive power of most Russian and American ICBM warheads, they must land within 500 or 600 feet of a silo to destroy it with 90 percent confidence.

Since 1977 virtually the entire Pentagon press corps has bought official claims of missile accuracy. Nearly every article about the strategic balance, about new missile programs, about such events as PD-59, tacitly or explicitly assumes that missiles on both sides are, or very shortly will be, extremely accurate.

arely mentioned (perhaps rarely realized) by these reporters is that when defense analysts talk about, say, 600-foot accuracies, they are referring to the missile's "C.E.P.," or "circular-error-probable," defined as the distance from the target within which a warhead will land 50 percent of the time. This is a good measuring device for artillery shells, but misleading for nuclear weapons, which you can fire only once.

Furthermore, much scientific evidence suggests that missiles cannot be so accurate, not even 50 percent of the time. One impediment lies in the quirks of nature. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. test their long-range missiles on an east-west flight path. Yet in a real nuclear attack the missiles would have to fly north-south; and over the Borealis region of the north pole in particular, gravity pressures, electromagnetic pulses, and the weather are totally different, different enough to throw a missile off course — not by much perhaps, but even an unanticipated error of 100 or 200 feet (in addition to the expected error) is enough to wreck a first-strike plan.

This nature's monkey wrench, often called "bias," prompted James Schlesinger to tell a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee in March 1974:

I believe there is some misunderstanding about the degree of reliability and accuracy of missiles. . . . [I]t is impossible for either side to acquire the degree of accuracy that would give them a high-confidence first strike because we will not know what the actual accuracy will be like in a real-world context. . . . The parameters of the flight from the western test range are not really very helpful in determining those accuracies to the Soviet Union.

This is crucial, Schlesinger continued, because:



if you have any degradation in operational accuracy . . . counterforce capability goes to the dogs very rapidly . . . and that is one of the reasons that I can publicly state that neither side can acquire a high-confidence first-strike capability.

This also means, although Schlesinger did not say as much, that neither can anyone have a high-confidence *second*-strike capability against such targets as ICBM silos.

The same volume of hearings recorded Schlesinger's unfortunate remark about 15,000 to 25,000 people dying in a limited nuclear war. Yet nobody had the wit to observe a major contradiction in Schlesinger's testimony: on the one hand, he asserted that precise, pinpoint attacks against military targets would dramatically reduce fatalities; on the other hand, he emphatically proclaimed that precise, pinpoint attacks were practically impossible.

#### The "bias" problem

"Bias" was totally ignored by the press until August 12, 1979, when Robert Kaiser and Walter Pincus published a devastatingly clever article in the Sunday Outlook section of *The Washington Post*. Dramatized as a high-level Kremlin

meeting in 1984, at which various Soviet defense advisers debate the merits of launching a nuclear first strike against America's missiles, the article clearly spelled out the numerous and virtually insurmountable obstacles at hand: two warheads are needed to destroy a missile silo with high confidence, yet unless the timing is just right the damage done by the first warhead would almost certainly neutralize the second; nobody has ever launched several missiles simultaneously; the chance that a missile will perform perfectly, in each of its many phases, is almost certainly far lower than most people think; and finally, the bias factor—anomalies in the earth's gravity pulls—could "distort the flight path of a missile" and wreck the entire operation, even if everything else (improbably) went splendidly.

Around the same time, James Fallows, a former Carter speechwriter, was composing an article on defense for his new employer, *The Atlantic Monthly*. A very impressive piece, called "Muscle-Bound Superpower," appearing in the October 1979 issue, it, too, raised the problem of bias. Fallows reported: "Every weapons technologist I spoke with clearly distinguished theoretical 'accuracies' of the

#### A brief chronicle of U.S. nuclear strategy

By the early 1950s, the United States had accumulated a substantial arsenal of nuclear weapons, while the Soviet Union had almost none. Were the Soviets to invade some critical region of the Free World, U.S. policy — as planned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Strategic Air Command — called for *prompt*, *all-out* retaliation, with nuclear bombs dropped on every single target in the USSR, China, and Eastern Europe that SAC pilots could hit. These targets included airfields, ports, air-defense sites, and industrial plants — not cities as such, although many of these targets happened to lie in or near cities. It was estimated that more than 100 million people under Communist rule would die.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles codified this policy in his famous "massive retaliation" speech of January 1954. President Eisenhower adopted the strategy (called the "New Look") for two reasons. First, he thought that the economy could not support the vast quantities of manpower and nonnuclear military equipment needed to confront potential Soviet infiltration or attack worldwide. Second, he doubted that in a world with nuclear weapons a superpower war fought with conventional weapons could stay that way for long.

Toward the late 1950s, however, different ideas emerged from the think-tank world, including the Air Forcesponsored RAND Corporation in Santa Monica — ideas about building up conventional forces for limited nonnuclear wars and allowing in the nuclear warplan for limited responses to limited Soviet nuclear strikes. Once the Soviets had their own long-range nuclear arsenal, it was reasoned, massive retaliation would be an act of suicide.

When Robert McNamara became secretary of defense under President Kennedy in 1961, he and his aides, many of them recruited from RAND, changed the war plan to emphasize destroying military targets (especially nuclear forces) and explicitly avoid hitting cities, at least so long as the Soviets did the same. The directive to the Joint Chiefs ordering this shift — the guidance for what became known as SIOP-63 — was composed in April 1961 and made policy in July 1962.

McNamara publicized the change in a June 1962 speech in Ann Arbor. When the Air Force used the occasion to rationalize its push for a wide variety of new nuclear weapons that McNamara opposed (the B-70 bomber, 2,100 ICBMs with bigger and more accurate warheads, and so on), the secretary stopped talking about limited nuclear options. Soon, he put out the word that U.S. policy was "assured destruction" and "finite deterrence": the U.S. would build nuclear weapons according to how destructive they would be against Soviet cities. Beyond a certain point, one runs out of major Soviet cities to hit; therefore, McNamara ordered, we would stop deploying weapons at that point.



missiles from likely performance." Fallows's article was widely read. His comments on bias should have compelled some defense reporters to make some phone calls. (After all, Fallows found several experts willing to talk about bias, although by his own admission he knew nothing about defense before he started researching his article.) If Fallows's sources were right, their statements threw great doubt on the need for the proposed \$60-billion MX missile system (the number-one news story of the strategic season), whose "accurate" warheads are designed to destroy Soviet missile silos, and whose multiple-shelter basing scheme is designed to protect the MX from attack by "accurate" Soviet warheads. If intercontinental ballistic missiles - American or Soviet - are not so accurate after all, there is no sense in wasting so much money on some elusive dream of going after Soviet missile silos, nor any need to protect to any further degree the current Minuteman ICBM force.

Ten months passed, and only one reporter had picked up the bias story: Andrew Cockburn, writing in the August 11, 1980, issue of *Defense Week*, under the headline, "The Myth of ICBM Vulnerability." Cockburn led off with an

account of President Carter's reaction to the Fallows article. According to Cockburn, Carter asked Harold Brown if the claims about bias were true. Brown asked Air Force Secretary John Stetson, Stetson asked his staff, and the question 'trickled down the corridors of power until it reached an Air Force colonel who had indeed studied the question. 'Oh yes,' he said, 'it's a very serious problem. We've been studying it for years and we don't know what to do about it.' ''

Cockburn then proceeded to deliver a lucidly detailed analysis of the bias problem. More to the point, he explicitly tied it to the MX and to PD-59, remarking that bias makes the former "wholly unnecessary" and the latter "a strategic policy . . . which takes no regard of technical reality," but merely serves as an "excuse to justify extra dollars for the ancillary paraphernalia of strategic warfare."

Defense Week has tiny circulation, but this article was reprinted in the Pentagon's press clips, Current News, which every self-respecting defense reporter at least skims every day. Furthermore, Xerox copies of the piece were floating all around Washington. Reporters could have done

However, this was mostly a ruse to undermine Air Force demands. The actual U.S. nuclear targeting plan did not change. For several years, the Pentagon could get away with this obfuscation because the U.S. still had enough missiles to destroy the relatively few, and poorly protected, Soviet missile installations.

Through the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, the Soviets embarked on an ICBM build-up and encased their missiles in hardened underground silos. Anticipating this progression, the U.S. developed multiple warheads (MIRVs), thus enabling one missile to destroy several targets, and made the warheads on these missiles more accurate (theoretically, anyway). In short, MIRVs and accurate warheads did not mark the beginning of a new strategy; rather, they were devised to maintain the ability to execute a strategy that had been policy for years.

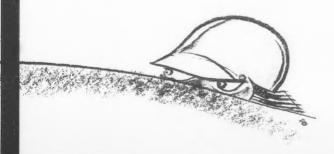
By the early 1970s, then, maintaining this countermilitary strategy required more weapons than "assured destruction" could justify. President Nixon signed NSDM-242 in

1974, casting MAD aside and bringing declared and actual strategy roughly in line with each other, as well as refining somewhat the McNamara options. For example, whereas the president's prearranged targeting options had previously called for the release of a few hundred nuclear warheads, now he could launch just dozens if he so chose.

Jimmy Carter's PD-59 of last August should be seen, therefore, in the tradition of periodic refinements to the McNamara strategy, not as something breathtakingly new. However, it was the first presidential directive outlining this strategy — which does legitimize, to an unprecedented degree, the unabashed pursuit of a whole host of new nuclear weapons systems within the more gleefully technocratic corridors of the Pentagon. Moreover, it encourages — among officials, reporters, editors, and the population generally — the delusion that with big enough budgets and smart enough weapons, we can fight, rationally control, and win a nuclear war.

Perhaps the policy declared in PD-59 would reduce the damage wreaked by a "nuclear exchange." Probably not. These weapons are not so precise or pristine as many so casually suppose. And once both sides start firing them in anger, it becomes extremely difficult to know when or how to stop, not least because one could never really trust the other side's declaration of cease-fire.

Certainly no one would advocate a return to the mad days of massive retaliation. Yet if both sides have strategies and weapons apparently designed to destroy each other's nuclear weapons, and if they believe that such a task is feasible, then — especially in the heat of a crisis — the idea of launching a preemptive first strike becomes an all too tempting option.



something with it. It's interesting, it's dramatic, it goes straight to the core of whether something like PD-59 is feasible — and it may suggest why Pentagon strategists are now emphasizing to relevant congressional committees the dangers of "ICBM vulnerability."

Yet only Michael Getler of *The Washington Post* followed up. In the October 9 issue, Getler questioned claims about missile vulnerability, noting that no one has tested firing hundreds of missiles at once, that exploding two warheads against a silo may be impossible, and that bias might wreck the accuracy needed to make an attack against hardened ICBM silos at all worthwhile. Even Getler, however, failed to link these physical obstacles to the MX or PD-59. The critique was clear, but its precise relevance to American defense programs was not.

The latest word on the matter comes again from Andrew Cockburn, writing with his brother (and Village Voice political writer) Alexander Cockburn, in the November 20 New York Review of Books. Their article, entitled "The Myth of Missile Accuracy," goes beyond the bias of gravitational pulls; using several scientists' calculations, it demonstrates that such mundanities as random variations in wind and weather, affecting the missile's warhead as it re-enters the atmosphere, could alone degrade accuracy by as much as 1,320 feet. This throws still further doubt on the whole notion of limited nuclear warfare as a cogent proposition for the real world.

Defense reporters, by now, certainly know of all the plagues bedeviling the doctrine of limited nuclear war. Conceivably, one reason most of them don't write about such things may be that they simply do not wish to confront the kernel of disillusionment contained within all those random uncertainties. Doing so would take all the fun out of "thinking about the unthinkable." If they did investigate the problems, they might discover that the precious calculations underlying the cherished war scenarios are shattered. This would mean that the assumptions underlying many of the articles they have written over the past few years are also shattered. And, to the attentive reader or newsroom editor, this might mean the transformation of their reputations — from reliable reporter of the latest in sophisticated analysis to gullible promoter of Pentagon propaganda.

#### Striking out in terra incognita

A major problem, especially for the confused newspaper reader, is that many of these defense reporters have "gone native," but they still don't know the lay of the land. The PD-59 affair provides a good case in point. Early news reports noted that PD-59 "represents a departure from the former strategy of . . . an all-out attack against major Soviet population centers" (U.S. News & World Report, August 25). "Until now, the United States has relied on a Strangelovian concept in which it would respond to a 'first strike' with an all-out attack that annihilated major Soviet cities and industrial areas, as well as military centers" (Newsweek, August 18). With PD-59, "U.S. strategists have concluded that threatening massive retaliation against the USSR may no longer be enough to deter a Soviet attack" (Time, August 25).

Missing from these reports is any awareness that the United States has, in fact, never had a policy of annihilating Soviet cities in the event of Soviet nuclear attack. Or that since mid-1961, U.S. nuclear-war plans have rejected "massive retaliation," and have explicitly separated military targets from urban-industrial targets. Or that these "new options," first established by Robert McNamara in 1961, were refined not in 1980 with PD-59, but in 1974 with Richard Nixon's National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) No. 242. PD-59 is distinctly evolutionary, not revolutionary, not even a "departure" from the course of strategic policy over the past two decades.\*

Some reporters have taken the trouble to point this out, but their efforts have muddied more than clarified. In his August 6 *Post* article, Michael Getler first notes that the "new strategy" places "less emphasis on all-out retaliation against Soviet cities" and more on Soviet military targets. Three paragraphs down, he reveals that this idea "is not new" and that Schlesinger "talked openly about it in 1974." But then four paragraphs later, he says that over the past twenty years the U.S. has "relied on having enough nuclear might to smash all major Soviet cities and industries" in the event of a Soviet first strike. No wonder even intelligent readers are confused.

till, this was better than Richard Burt's early performance. His August 6 piece in the *Times* does not even mention antecedents to PD-59 prior to the Carter administration. In his August 7 report he does refer to Schlesinger, but only by remarking, midway through the article, that Carter's new policy "seems to mark the culmination of an idea that was articulated in the early 1970s . . . ." He does not mention that this "articulation" was formalized in an official national-security document, and he rehashes once more the myth that U.S. policy during the 1960s called for "all-out retaliation."

I. F. Stone, in the August 13 Village Voice, came closer to the truth than most, pointing out that PD-59 has roots in the Nixon-Schlesinger war plan. And on October 12, Jack Anderson, writing in The Washington Post about the NOT-SO-NEW NUCLEAR STRATEGY, went so far as to excerpt lengthy portions of a leaked copy of NSDM-242 to prove the point. Still, not even Stone's or Anderson's formidable files of clippings and hearings seem to extend back to McNamara days.

Only two reporters went that far: John Osborne in the August 30 New Republic and William Lanouette in the September 6 National Journal. How did they know? They simply read a seven-page summary of U.S. strategic targeting history, distributed by William Kincade, executive secretary of the Arms Control Association, at an ACA press conference on PD-59. Those who missed the briefing could

<sup>\*</sup> The only innovative mission called for in PD-59 is the use of some strategic weapons, based in the United States, to attack mobile targets on a European battlefield. Beecher, Burt, and Getler opaquely allude to this, but only Richard Thaxton, writing in the October Progressive, identifies this as the uniquely novel aspect of the "new" doctrine.

have run across the same information by reading Harold Brown's fiscal 1981 Defense Department Annual Report:

It has never been U.S. policy to limit ourselves to massive counter-city options in retaliation, nor have our plans been so circumscribed. For nearly 20 years, we have explicitly included a range of employment options. . . . [W]e have always considered it important, in the event of war, to be able to attack the forces that could do damage to the United States and its allies. . . .

— those "forces," of course, being Soviet missiles, bombers, and submarines.

In the aftermath of PD-59 press leaks, Harold Brown made the same point in his Naval War College speech on August 20: "Let me emphasize that PD-59 is not a new strategic doctrine." Even so, some seemed not to have got the message. Newsweek's October 27 cover story, "Is America Strong Enough?" still reported: "The rationale of PD No. 59 is to give the President more options than MAD by allowing him to adjust his counterattack to the size of the Soviet first strike." And as late as November 13, Richard Burt was telling his Times readers about "the recent decision by President Carter to select military forces in the Soviet Union rather than cities as targets."

In short, the typical defense reporter has grown to feel at home with the esoterica of nuclear doctrine, but in fact he clearly lacks a grasp of its essentials. The nature of nuclear war, the limitations of technology in the face of numerous uncertainties, even the history of nuclear strategy, all remain foreign to all but a few of those who are paid to tell the public about defense policy at a time when more people are more interested in such issues than at any time in the past fifteen or twenty years.

The defense reporter has gone native, but he is blithely

gliding along without a field map, with no idea of where he's been or where he's going. His strategic swami shows him the lovely sights, and teaches him the euphonious argot of this exotic new land; but he is rarely exposed to the madcap anarchy lurking just beneath the veneer of a seemingly well-controlled regime. Watching the parades, he is always told — and usually believes — that the naked emperor strides fully clothed in the finest of haberdashery. Spellbound by the briefings of the royal claque, he gazes only at the Mighty Oz, never turning to see the charlatan behind the curtain.



On October 9. I delivered what I considered to be an important address to the Detroit Economic Club. It was important to me because, as the Citizens Party candidate for president, I had been campaigning on a full-time basis for nearly six months, yet I had attracted virtually no attention from the national news media. In Detroit I planned to lay out a detailed program for revitalization of the automobile industry based on a transition from gasoline to alcohol. Much of my speech was based on new research done at my environmental institute at Washington University. I believed naively - that because I was speaking in a city whose life depends on the automobile industry; that because I was speaking before a prestigious forum, one that regularly draws such speakers as Henry Ford and Douglas Fraser; that because I was addressing national issues, the energy crisis and the economy; and that because I was reporting on new research, surely the news media would consider what I had to say important.

Imagine my shock when I discovered that my speech attracted almost no attention from the national press and that even the two local papers — The Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press — carried not a line on what I had said.

This was not an isolated incident. In six months of campaigning, hardly a word about the Citizens Party had appeared in the national press or on the networks. We concluded that we had to reassess our campaign — a conclusion that, I suppose, should have been reached a month earlier when a television reporter said to me, "Dr. Commoner, are you a serious candidate or are you just running on the issues?"

Speaking out on the issues, as I had been doing on a daily basis throughout the campaign, clearly was inadequate to attract the kind of media attention we needed to get our message to the voters. Bill Zimmerman, my campaign manager, suggested that dealing with the national media was like talking to a mule: first you had to hit it over the head with a two-by-four to get its attention. With that thought in mind, he suggested a radio commercial starting out with a word that some newspapers quaintly refer to as a "barnyard epithet." Reluctantly, other party leaders and I agreed it had to be done. I say "reluctantly" not because of the use of the word. The dictionary defines it as "foolish, uninformed, and exaggerated talk." I think that accurately describes the empty campaign rhetoric offered in 1980 by Carter, Reagan, and Anderson. Our reluctance stemmed only from concern that we had to go to such lengths to capture the attention of the news media.

The result was spectacular. In two days the Citizens Party received more news stories and broadcast time than it had received in its entire history. ABC's World News Tonight ran a segment on us. Walter Cronkite mentioned the commercial, Good Morning America and the Today show did pieces. Nearly every major newspaper in the country carried stories. But most interesting to me was a call my press secretary received from a reporter for the Detroit Free Press. That newspaper, which had carried not a word about my plan for revitalizing the auto industry, did run a front-page story about the commercial. I think that is a sad commentary on the state of the profession.

or the first time, The New York Times called us. In addition to running a lengthy story the day after the commercial was aired, the Times simultaneously approved a long-standing request of Washington bureau reporter Philip Shabecoff that he be allowed to spend a few days covering me. The result was an excellent story about the substance of my campaign. Was the timing of approval for Shabecoff's request mere coincidence?

This and similar experiences during my campaign have emboldened me to offer some suggestions to the press on coverage of presidential elections. I believe journalists should reassess the way issues are covered. I think reporters should take a hard look at their relationships with the Democratic and Republican parties. And I think the news media should at least start listening to what nontraditional candidates are saying.

Every four years the media vow to make a serious attempt to cover the issues. This year, in some respects, they did better than in the past. The TV evening news shows featured series comparing the major candidates' stands on some of the critical questions of the 1980s. And no less a pundit than The Washington Post's David Broder reported - somewhat breathlessly - that The Des Moines Register had "been running a series of front page articles on the issues" (my emphasis). Putting the "issues" on the evening news and front page was commendable, I suppose, but did it really serve the public?

Consider energy. I submit that by their own statements committing this country to continued dependence on nonrenewable energy, it was clear that neither Carter, Reagan, nor Anderson understood that issue. But by having the national debate on energy defined by the minute differences between their positions, we had no meaningful debate at all. It was like having a debate on religion in America with participation limited to Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard, and Jerry Falwell. Other issues as well nuclear proliferation, environmental protection, and the one the Citizens Party considered fundamental, corporate control of the economy - were not discussed by the major candidates and were therefore absent from the national debate. Is it any wonder so many Americans stayed home on election day?

In such a situation, in which the leading candidates' definition of the issues failed to produce adequate discussion, journalists had two options: they could have expanded the debate to other candidates or experts capable of addressing the issues fully and intelligently; or, at the least, they could have forced the major candidates to answer tough questions on the issues. They did

This article is a post-election adaptation of a speech delivered during the campaign at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.



neither. And so the media must take some responsibility for a campaign which, in a year that certainly did not lack critical issues, once again became an issueless popularity contest.

One of the roots of that problem, I believe, is the media's clear bias in favor of the two-party system. The bias is pervasive and can be picked up from any major newspaper or network. When we announced formation of the Citizens Party in August 1979, Washington Star political columnists Jack Germond and Jules Witcover called us "still another attack on the two-party system" and criticized our effort on the ground that people involved with the Citizens Party would be "unwilling to do the dirty work involved in getting into a position to influence the Republican and Democratic parties" from within.

Well, what if you happen to believe that influencing the Republican and Democratic parties is not enough — that it is time for a new political force? We in the Citizens Party believe that coalition parties which have to satisfy their conservative wings and rely on corporations for financing simply cannot address the fundamental issues of our time. Such parties are, in fact, part of the problem.

As a consequence of this bias, the immense resources devoted to reporting on what the major candidates and their running mates are doing are far out of proportion to the news actually being made. I suppose I was most vexed during my lonely travels across the country when I saw George Bush — who had

said publicly that his specific mission in the campaign was *not* to make any news — followed by a plane-load of reporters and TV crews who dutifully reported every day that he had, in fact, made *no news*. I fail to understand how such allocation of valuable talent serves either the news media or the public.

I must acknowledge that during the campaign I was accorded many excellent interviews by local reporters that were given good play by newspapers and the electronic media alike. For that I was grateful, but unfortunately it is a truism that in a run for president it's the national news media that matter. A few reporters from major newspapers and networks occasionally were assigned to cover me, and some wrote excellent reports, but the majority were fascinated by the difficulties of running a campaign when you are not a major candidate. For example, an NBC News crew followed me for three days, including the day of my Detroit speech. Their report broadcast at 12:30 A.M., I might add showed several scenes of me getting on and off commercial flights and being picked up at airports in small cars. The Detroit speech, which had been filmed, ended up on the cutting-room floor.

et me acknowledge that I realize that the press has obligations in covering a presidential election that extend beyond simply reporting on the issues. It must report the news, and that means reporting on a daily basis what Carter and Reagan, as the leading candidates, did. However, I suggest that the press carried its obligations to an extreme by blocking out huge amounts of time or space to be filled whether or not the candidates made any news. It led to incredible trivialization. More Americans were aware that Nancy Reagan passed out candy and rolled oranges down the aisles of airplanes than knew that I was running for president.

I hope this doesn't sound like sour grapes from a losing candidate. I maintained from the outset that I had never expected to win, or even gain a significant percentage of the vote. I am simply frustrated that, after months of speaking out — I believe intelligently and informatively — about the issues facing this country, my messages were not communicated to the electorate.

In the inevitable election post mortems. I believe the question most journalists should be asking themselves is, Did I, in 1980, adequately serve the majority of my readers, listeners, or viewers? The answer must, I think, take into account that fewer than half of all eligible Americans voted for Carter and Reagan combined. It is easy to write off the rest as apathetic, as unlikely ever to exercise their franchise. However, I happen to agree with Cornell political scientist Theodore J. Lowi, who views these Americans not as apathetic, but rather as antipathetic. They are opposed to the politics of the two-party system, opposed to the only politics portrayed to them by the national news media. They might leave their homes and vote if the full range of available ideas and options were made known to them.

Let's look at it another way, from a selfish journalistic perspective. Would a serious journalist want to cover another presidential election in which debate centers on such issues as: Did A say that B has the support of the Ku Klux Klan? Is B the "nostalgia" candidate? Do we really want to reintroduce the Biblical interpretation of Genesis? Just as the Citizens Party — and the Libertarians for that matter - offered challenging new ideas in 1980, minority party candidates will be doing the same in years to come. Historically, the role of minority parties has been to bring forth such ideas. And, if such ideas are valid, the major parties eventually adopt them. Or, if the major parties are moribund — as was the case in the 1850s and may be the case in the 1980s — one of the minority parties achieves majority status. In either event, isn't reporting on the new ideas and identifying future political trends more exciting and significant journalism than what passed for political reporting this year?

I believe that this country is on the threshold of a major political realignment, and that the Citizens Party will play an important role in it. But even if that doesn't happen, minority parties will continue to add zest to the political life of this nation. To journalists who might consider paying more attention to us, I'll make a pledge: We'll never promise not to make news. And I hope we won't have to resort to saying something outrageous just to get your attention.

# VDTs: The overlooked story right in the newsroom

If you want to learn about a health and safety controversy affecting thousands of journalists — and millions of other U.S. workers — don't rush out and buy a major daily

by JEFF SORENSEN and JON SWAN

ccording to the International Data Corporation, more than 1.6 million video display terminals, or VDTs, were in use throughout the country in 1979; by 1984, the Waltham, Massachusetts, research firm predicts, the number will have jumped to about 5.3 million. Newspaper offices account for only a small percentage of the current figure. The American Newspaper Publishers Association's research institute puts the count at at least 23,000, the number reported by its members. According to the ANPA, newspaper use of VDTs has increased by about 50 percent annually since the new technology was introduced to offices of all kinds in the late 1960s. So this number, too, will rise until, at last, the clack of the typewriter is silenced in the computerized world of journalism.

The advantages of VDTs — each, essentially, a combination keyboard and TV-like screen hooked up to a central computer — are manifold: they afford reporters and editors instant access to stored information; they speed the editing process; they produce copy that can be set in cold type immediately or held for future use. The newspaper industry has been willing to invest a lot of money to switch over to these time- and labor-saving devices. According to the ANPA, a paper must invest about \$200,000 to install a "fully automated system" that includes twenty VDTs in the classified ad and editorial departments. Mike Clurman, assistant to the vice president of operations for *The Washington Post*, says that that paper will spend about \$8 million to convert to cold type and VDTs.

Whether a device that is perceived as a boon by industry is as hazard-free as it is cost-effective is a question that has recently become a source of controversy. Considering how closely this controversy affects journalists, not to mention the estimated five to seven million Americans who daily use VDTs at such places as banks, airline and insurance offices, and government agencies, it is ironic that, by and large, the nation's major dailies are the last place to look for information regarding the health and safety aspects of this basic element of the new technology.

A VDT works on much the same principle as a television set. Electrons beamed from a cathode ray tube onto the dark display screen interact with phosphors on the screen to produce light in the form of letters and numbers. In the process, the machines emit low levels of both ionizing and nonionizing radiation. (Ionizing radiation, such as X-rays, is so named because it can alter the atomic structure of cells and create dangerous, unstable ions.) Whether exposure to radiation at these levels is harmless, potentially harmful, or demonstrably so remains a matter of scientific dispute. Federal health officials, among many others, have already made up their mind on this matter; on the basis of tests conducted at several newspapers, they have concluded that properly functioning VDTs pose no radiation threat whatsoever. Other causes for concern have been documented in a study carried out by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at the San Francisco Chronicle, the San Francisco Examiner, and The Oakland Tribune, as well as at Blue Shield's Bay Area headquarters, which found that VDT-users developed visual, muscular, and psychological symptoms, including depression and anxiety, not reported among non-users. On the basis of this study, whose preliminary findings were released last June, Michael J. Smith, chief of motivation and stress research for NIOSH, concluded that "If VDT use is continued over a long period of time, it appears that there may be some possible long-term chronic eye damage." Another NIOSH study, to be undertaken later this year, should provide more information about long-term damage.

The question of eye damage arose in 1977, shortly after the devices were introduced at *The New York Times*, when it was discovered that two *Times* copy editors were developing cataracts. Since then, two other journalists — both at the Baltimore *Sun*, which converted to the new machines in 1975 — have been diagnosed as having cataracts or incipient cataracts. A fifth case involving a VDT-using journalist was recently noted in the Chicago alternative weekly *Reader*. In all instances, the journalists were well under the age at which cataracts ordinarily occur. The new NIOSH study will attempt to put these figures in perspective by conducting an ophthalmological study involving journalists at the Baltimore *Sun* and a control group of people who have not been occupationally exposed to VDTs.

The piece of journalism that opened the way for what little press coverage of VDTs there has been was Paul Brodeur's two-part *New Yorker* series called "Microwaves," which

Jeff Sorensen runs The Nation's news syndication service; Jon Swan is the Review's senior editor.



Testing for danger: NIOSH officials have tested VDTs at many newspaper offices, including that of The Oakland Tribune, shown here. On the basis of these tests, NIOSH has concluded that VDTs present no radiation hazard. Anomalous high readings—at the Tribune, at Newsday, and at The New York Times—are attributed to "capacitive coupling," in which the VDT reacts to the testing device. Questions have been raised about the adequacy of these tests—and about the validity of the current radiation safety standard, soon to be made much stricter

appeared in December 1976. (In the vernacular, "microwaves" is a collective term for all forms of nonionizing radiation, including radio frequency radiation.) Brodeur's articles explained, among other things, why it was that the standard for occupational exposure to microwave radiation in the United States had been set at 10 milliwatts per square centimeter - a thousand times higher than the Soviet Union's 10 microwatts per square centimeter standard. The reason was that in the U.S. only the thermal effects of radiation were regarded as hazardous, while in the Soviet Union researchers had, early on, recognized that radiation at levels too low to heat sensitive parts of the human body could affect the central nervous system. In part, these findings reflected a greater readiness on the part of the Soviets to pay attention to the complaints of radar workers than was the case in the U.S. As Brodeur explained:

During the Second World War, Soviet scientists had taken complaints of headache, eye pain, and fatigue on the part of Russian radar workers seriously enough to conduct full-scale investigations of them, whereas in the United States similar complaints had been dismissed as "subjective symptoms"... Accordingly, by the middle of the nineteen-sixties Soviet scientists had amassed a vast amount of information concerning the neurological and physiological effects of low-intensity microwave radiation on human beings, whereas their American counterparts ... had for the most part contented themselves with demonstrating the heating effects of high-level microwaves on fur-bearing test animals.

Brodeur's articles also introduced readers to a researcher who is a central figure in the current dispute over VDTs: Dr. Milton M. Zaret. An ophthalmologist who practices in Scarsdale, New York, and who is also a clinical associate professor of ophthalmology at the New York University-Bellevue Medical Center, Dr. Zaret has been studying the effects of microwave radiation on the human eye since 1959, undertaking eye-study programs in the 1960s for the Air Force and the Defense Department, for example. Brodeur's 1976 description of him — "one of the most controversial figures to emerge from the tangle of controversy surrounding the biological effects of microwaves over the last decade" — remains apt.

In July 1977, half a year after Brodeur's pioneering articles appeared in The New Yorker, The Washington Post ran a two-part series headlined MICROWAVE RADIATION HEALTH HAZARD WORRIES SCIENTISTS. "Microwave radiation has long been believed to cause injuries such as cataracts and internal burns at exposures of high, or acute, intensities," wrote staff writer Stephen J. Lynton. "What researchers are now seeking to determine is whether harmful effects may also occur at low levels." Among the scientists interviewed was Russell L. Carpenter, a research biologist for the Food and Drug Administration's Bureau of Radiological Health. His experiments, Lynton reported, had demonstrated that cataracts will form in rabbits' eyes only after exposure to relatively high levels of radiation. However, Lynton continued: "His experiments [also] indicated that microwave radiation may have a cumulative effect — an effect caused by repeated, short doses of radiation rather than a single long dose." Another scientist heard from was Dr. Zaret; he said that he had examined more than 100 patients suffering from cataracts and several hundred patients with eye injuries, all of which he was able to attribute to exposure to microwave radiation and several of which he attributed to radiation at intensities well below the recommended, but not enforced, 10-milliwatt safety standard.

In December 1977, The New York Times covered much of the same ground in a long article by science reporter Malcolm W. Browne headlined EXPERTS DEBATE THE AMOUNT OF MICROWAVE RADIATION THAT CAN CAUSE DANGER TO HEALTH. Like Lynton, Browne focused on microwave radiation "in the form of television and communications signals, radar, microwave ovens and other uses that most Americans take . . . for granted." Unlike Lynton, Browne touched on VDTs — which had been phased in at the Times over the last two years and were soon to become a matter of internal concern — in a reference to Paul Brodeur's recently

published book, The Zapping of America. The book, Browne wrote, "charges that the Defense Department and microwave equipment manufacturers have conspired to conceal the dangers of low-level microwave radiation, including leakage from microwave ovens, radar and radio antennas, video display terminals and other devices." (A survey we made of coverage of this subject during the late 1970s brought to light two articles that more directly linked the microwave story to the newsroom. One, in The Providence Sunday Journal of January 22, 1978, simply included newspapers in a list of institutions "turning to computerized video display terminals . . . that emit low levels of microwave radiation"; the other, in the weekly Hartford Advocate of February 1, 1978, noted: "This article . . . could not have been written without microwave hook-ups to Washington, and the words had to be typed out on the Advocate's video-display terminal. Such are the ironies of a modern predicament - how we learned to stop worrying

## A tale of two weeklies: from reassurance to concern

Two U.S. weeklies have paid some attention to the VDT health and safety controversy in recent years. In its "We've Been Asked" department, the June 12, 1978, U.S. News & World Report raised the question: How serious is the concern about the safety of computer terminals? The answer, in full, was:

Long-term exposure to microwave radiation from video-display terminals has been suspected as a cause of premature cataracts in writers and editors who work long hours in front of television-like devices used in writing and editing copy. The linkage, however, remains very much in doubt at present.

The June 30, 1980, issue of *Business Week* contained a closer look at the subject: "Uncovering Health Dangers in VDTs." Referring to a recently completed NIOSH study conducted in newsrooms and other offices in the San Francisco area, the two-page article stated: "The just-completed surveys pretty much debunked the radiation myth, but they have uncovered other health dangers that have the potential to cause long-term injury to regular VDT users." The article was accompanied by the following sidebar, apparently addressed to employers:

#### How to avoid mistakes in operating video terminals

- ☐ Give employees rest breaks, particularly heavy users
- ☐ Buy movable keyboards and adjustable chairs
- $\hfill\Box$  Add coatings, hoods, and other aids to reduce glare on the screen
- □ Upgrade training programs to insure the proper use of equipment
- ☐ Listen to employee complaints about working on the equipment
- ☐ Don't place terminals adjacent to one another
- ☐ Don't put a terminal next to a window or under high-intensity lighting
- $\hfill\Box$  Require operators with bifocal glasses to have eye tests before working on VDTs.

and started to love microwaves.")

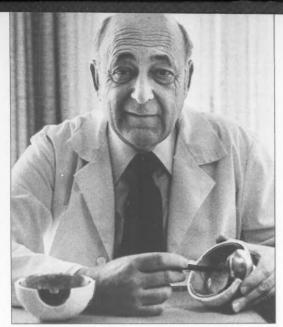
The *Times* began its conversion to VDTs in the fall of 1975, and the first terminals were "on line" in February of the following year. Among the first users was News Service copy editor Samuel Weiss, then twenty-eight. Intermittently, his eyes hurt and became inflamed. In January 1977, Weiss recalls, "I had severe eyestrain and I thought I just needed new glasses." He consulted a New York ophthalmologist, who found small opacities in the lenses of both eyes—the precursors of cataracts. Later that month he was discussing his eye problem at the office; another copy editor, John Woodford, thirty-five, was sitting nearby. As Weiss recalls, "He looked up and said, "You have cataracts? I just found out that I have cataracts"—and we both knew something was going on."

Woodford, too, had recently consulted an ophthalmologist who had detected incipient cataracts. Then, having read about Dr. Zaret in *The New Yorker*, he had consulted the Scarsdale clinician. Dr. Zaret had diagnosed his cataracts as "bilateral incipient radiant-energy cataracts," whose signature, he says, is that they start on the capsular surface of the lens rather than within the lens. After his conversation at the office with Woodford, Weiss, too, visited Dr. Zaret, who, after ascertaining that Weiss had no history of diabetes and checking for other possible causes of cataracts, diagnosed the cause as radiant energy.

Weiss and Woodford asked to be taken off the terminals, and for a time they were. The Newspaper Guild of New York subsequently charged that the terminals posed a threat to the health and safety of employees who used them. The issue was submitted to arbitration in June 1977. The decision was handed down in February of the following year. Arbitrator Maurice C. Benewitz, after reviewing NIOSH tests and the findings of a panel of medical consultants, found that electromagnetic radiation from the terminals did not constitute "an ocular cataract hazard" and that "the vast majority of all employees may work in safety upon the VDT machines at the *Times*." (Several ophthalmologists have since gone on record as saying that VDTs cannot possibly cause cataracts.)

Woodford had hoped that he and Weiss would not be put back on the terminals, "that they would give us another assignment — but they wouldn't." He left the paper and now works in public relations with the Ford Motor Company in Detroit. "The VDTs were the main reason I left," says Woodford. "I think there is enough doubt [about their safety] that I don't want to be the guinea pig. Now that I'm not around VDTs, I haven't had the visual problems." Weiss remained at the *Times*. He still uses VDTs. His vision, he says, has not deteriorated.

The decision in the Weiss-Woodford case seemed, on the face of it, to vindicate the machines. Yet the arbitrator's "Opinion and Award" raised questions even as it settled the particular dispute. A recurrent theme in the opinion is that, yes, the cataracts are "compatible with those reported from exposure to radiant energy," in the words of a NIOSH report cited by Benewitz, "but they also are compatible with those seen congenitally, or those associated with other etiologies." The NIOSH report continues: "Since the en-



The controversial Dr. Zaret: While NIOSH insists VDTs are safe, Dr. Zaret says they can cause cataracts

vironmental investigation did not disclose any significant radiant energy emanating from the VDT units, the etiology of the cataracts remains undetermined." Thus, the chief evidence that the two journalists' cataracts were not caused by the VDTs was the failure of repeated tests of the equipment to show "significant" amounts of radiation. This begged the question of whether a reputedly insignificant amount of radiation, either by itself or in combination with fatigue caused by image flicker and screen glare, might induce the formation of cataracts; at the same time, it assumed the adequacy of the NIOSH tests carried out at the Times. In a paper delivered at an international symposium on electromagnetic waves and biology, held in a Paris suburb last summer, Dr. Zaret, who had served as a consultant to the Guild, sharply criticized the NIOSH tests. His paper read, in part: "Not only did NIOSH use instruments that were inadequate for measuring a large segment of the suspect portion of the electromagnetic spectrum, but it also found [when the terminals were shut off] a dangerous level of hertzian radiation, 1 milliwatt per square centimeter, in the Times building without ever even attempting to identify its source!" He further pointed out that the tests did not replicate the "intermittent spurious emissions" resulting from equipment malfunctions in the past. And he asserted that the testing of individual machines was inadequate; to ascertain the cumulative radiation within the workplace, "the entire integrated system network" must be investigated.

he *Times* did not report on this internal dispute, which might well have been of interest to many members of the general public; nor did any other of the major dailies included in our survey: *The Washington Post, The Washington Star,* the *Los Angeles Times,* the *Chicago Tribune,* the *Chicago Sun-Times,* and the Baltimore *Sun.* (*The Boston Globe* could not provide clips be-

cause its computer data bank was being repaired and modified.) Nor did any of these papers cover an event that grew out of an increasing concern over microwaves. This was a three-week-long work stoppage at the United Nations typing pool in January 1979, just as the General Assembly reconvened. French, British, and Spanish members of the pool organized the walkout to protest their being required to use machines whose risks, they believed, had yet to be determined. Two hundred and fifty typists and translators, of various nationalities, joined the protest. According to Lowell Flanders, president of the U.N. staff union, about 100 typists still refuse to use the terminals. (Ms. magazine picked up on the story in its December 1979 issue.)

Several months earlier, a similar peg had been provided when seven copy and page editors at the *International Herald Tribune* left the paper over the introduction of the new technology. In an article in the April 12, 1978, issue of the now defunct *Paris Metro*, co-editor Craig Unger (now a senior editor at *New York* magazine), wrote:

At the focal point of the problems between the editorial staff and management has been the replacement of typewriters with visual display terminals (VDTs). "It's not so much that we're against the VDTs," says one staffer still on the Trib, "as that we want to be protected against any dangers from them. . . . If you are working with a new technology, you want to know what you are getting into. . . . "

Like the other papers in our sample, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, which jointly control a majority share of the *Herald Tribune*, ignored this exodus of editors.

The Post has run two articles that mention VDTs - the most recent of which was a September 15, 1980, story headlined post's APPEARANCE IS CHANGING AS IT MOVES TO COMPUTER AGE. Neither article mentioned the health and safety controversy. A check with the Times index and calls to the libraries of the other papers indicate that since 1975 no articles either on VDTs generally or on the various questions that have been raised about them have appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Star, or the Los Angeles Times. The New York Times scored a recent near miss with its publication on October 21, 1980, of 'BENIGN' RADIATION INCREASINGLY CITED AS DANGEROUS. Written by science reporter Browne, it announced that the American National Standards Institute was considering reducing allowable exposure to nonionizing radiation to one-tenth of the present standard - from 10 milliwatts to 1 milliwatt as a result, in part, of new research suggesting that even extremely low doses of nonionizing radiation may have farreaching biological consequences. Television, radio, telephone, radar, and electric power transmission lines were enumerated as sources of low level radiation; this time, no mention was made of VDTs. The stricter-standard story. meanwhile, was hardly new; it had been discussed in the trade publication Computerworld, for example, back in April in a story entitled " 'Newsday' [VDTs] Found Leaking Radiation; Metal Shields Installed to Protect Workers."

In Chicago, the papers have been slightly less reticent about VDTs. Last year, the *Tribune* ran six wire-service stories that mentioned the devices and one useful contribution by a staff writer: science editor Ronald Kotulak's April

20 story, SURVEYS FIND ELECTRONIC AGE A STRAIN ON WORKERS. (Two June wire-service pieces emphasized that while stress was a real problem, radiation was not). The *Tribune*, incidentally, started changing over to VDTs six years ago; the changeover will soon be completed.

The Sun-Times, which completed its conversion to VDTs two years ago, has published a single article on VDTs — and a funny thing happened to it on its way out to readers on March 11, 1980. Written by William Hines, the paper's Washington bureau science writer, the article bore the headline VDTs CAN HURT VISION: EXPERT. The expert was Dr. Zaret, who was quoted as saying, among other things, that microwave radiation can develop when VDTs are not maintained in tip-top condition. Dr. Zaret also mentioned that four out of six cases of eye damage he had observed in patients who work at VDTs involved editors or reporters on large daily papers. Hines's story was yanked after appearing in the earliest of the Sun-Times's five daily editions.

The March 21 Chicago Reader ran an interesting article about the "all-too-brief" appearance of the Hines story. Neil Tesser, a frequent Reader contributor, called Stuart Loory, then-managing editor for news at the Sun-Times (he is now vice president and managing editor of Cable News Network, in Washington, D.C.), to ask why the piece had

been yanked. "It's an internal affair," Loory replied. "But it's important to realize that over two years ago the NIOSH study at The New York Times discredited Zaret's findings" - a conclusion which Dr. Zaret was given space to contest; he asserted that "the NIOSH study itself has been discredited." The May 2 Reader contained a long letter from the Sun-Times's executive vice president and general manager, Joe B. McAdams, challenging the credibility of Dr. Zaret's research ("The fact is that Dr. Zaret's views on the health hazards of VDTs are not held in high regard by recognized experts in the field"), and a detailed reply by Tesser. Returning to the subject in a May 30 VDT UPDATE, Tesser mentioned a thirty-three-year-old nonjournalist who had worked at a VDT for a year and was about to undergo surgery for the removal of a cataract, and cited another cataract sufferer (mentioned earlier in this article), whom Tesser described as "a 30-ish chap" who spent most of his day at "a Chicago daily" in front of a VDT.

Like the Sun-Times, the Baltimore Sun has run only a single article on VDTs, a five-inch wire-service story that appeared last June. Given the fact that two Sun journalists have been diagnosed as having cataracts, this seemed very short shrift. We called the Sun's medical writer, Mary Knudson, to ask if she knew of any further coverage of the

#### Bargaining for health and safety

Ever since VDTs were introduced into offices, many employees have reported suffering from tired eyes, headaches, backaches, mental stress, and other discomforts. Now, some unions are endorsing measures — such as rest breaks and company-paid eye examinations — aimed at protecting employees. The case for such measures is strong.

"Because everyone gets sore eyes sometimes, people often think of eyestrain as a minor problem," says Tobi Bergman, a member of the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health, an organization many of whose members belong to union locals. "But when it is an almost daily occurrence, eyestrain is a serious health problem, which may cause temporary deterioration of vision."

Wendi Fox, who used a VDT for eight hours per day last year as an employee of the City of New York, reports that her screen ''had an orange display on a green background. Plus, the lights were very bright in the room, so there was a great deal of glare on the screen. . . . I felt like I was walking in a fog much of the time. Everything was sort of surrealistic. Everything looked pale blue. That was a good deal of the reason I quit my job.'' Many people in her office seemed to be unusually short-tempered, Fox recalls. ''Everybody has a headache, everybody's back aches, so there's a great deal of frustration and a lot of arguing.''

A copy editor for *The New York Times*, who has used the terminals for five or six hours per day for two years, says, "I feel the effects most when I wake up. The eyestrain is the most severe then. You usually have bloodshot, tired eyes in the morning." He argues that VDTs should be

segregated in separate rooms where lights can be turned low to cut down on glare.

In Europe, researchers have for years been publishing studies that link VDT use to eyestrain. Professor Etienne Grandjean of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, for example, has been studying the effects of VDT use on vision for more than a decade. In a 1978 study, he reported that "continuous work on [VDT] displays may produce visual fatigue indicated by a decrease of accommodation power [the ability of the lens of the eye to focus on objects at various distances]. Painful reactions in the eyes and headaches can be associated with the visual fatigue." Two other important researchers in this field are Professors Olov Östberg and Ewa Gunnarsson, of Sweden's National Board of Occupational Safety and Health. In one study, released in 1977, they reported that 85 percent of a sample group of Scandinavian Airlines System employees who used VDTs complained of a variety of eye problems, such as strain, pain, and itching. Forty-six percent of the sampled ticketing employees termed the problems "great" or "very great." Östberg and Gunnarsson recommended that workers, after using the screens for an hour, should be assigned for an hour to another job.

David Eisen, director of research and information for The Newspaper Guild, says that, partly as a result of such research and of the warier attitude toward VDTs that prevails in Europe, unions in Sweden, West Germany, and Britain have been able to win contracts which largely provide what unions in the U.S. are only now starting to push for. The

subject in her paper. "To my knowledge," she said, "that's all we've done, and I think that's wrong, because the Sun newsroom is aware that VDTs are controversial and especially because we at the Sun are about to become involved in a federal study by NIOSH to see if there is a higher rate of cataracts among VDT users than among non-VDT users." Knudson went on to say that last February she had offered to write a comprehensive account of the VDT controversy, but her editor told her this would be a conflict of interest since Knudson is chairperson of the health and new technology committee of the Sun Papers' Guild. "He said he would assign it to another reporter," Knudson said, "and that's the last I heard about it. The story hasn't been written."

he best coverage of the VDT controversy, in our judgment, appeared in two publications we had not included in our survey but which we sampled unsystematically: the Bergen County, New Jersey, *Record*, and *Maclean's*, the Canadian newsweekly.

The Record's contribution, which appeared on March 11, 1980, must surely qualify as the most comprehensive examination of the subject to appear in the U.S. press to date. Nearly a hundred column-inches long, it began on page 1 and took up almost all of page 11, and in the course of his

Guild, for its part, advocates that employees not be required to work on the terminals for more than two hours without a break and that employers pay for periodic eye exams and for corrective lenses for employees who find they need glasses or stronger lenses for their work on VDTs. While no U.S. newspaper has agreed to all these provisions, says Eisen, some progress has been made. Employers now pay for eye exams at about twenty newspapers, including The Washington Post, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, and the Baltimore Sun. Eight newspapers, including the San Francisco Chronicle and The Oakland Tribune, pay for eye-glasses. Limited rest breaks have been instituted at The Minneapolis Tribune and Star, the St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch, the Akron Beacon Journal, and the Lynn, Massachusetts, Item. However, these breaks are scheduled at company discretion and so that they will not interfere with the work

The U.S. press has, by and large, kept mum about these developments. A notable exception is *The Wall Street Journal*. Joann S. Lublin's October 27, 1980, article headlined HEALTH FEARS ON VDTs SPUR UNION ACTION provided an intelligent roundup of worker complaints, federal studies, and union moves. The twenty-column-inch story received prominent play. Starting on page 1 of the *Journal*'s second section, it was accompanied by a drawing showing three pickets walking around a VDT. A sign carried by one of the pickets reads: "Warning! Health Hazard." Though the print was large, editors at other papers still don't seem to have gotten the message.

\*\*Jeff Sorensen\*\*

eighty-eight-paragraph article staff writer Elliot Pinsley cites an impressive array of conflicting sources and touches every conceivable base. The headline, AUTOMATING THE PRINTED WORD, together with the jump head, VDTs - STARS OF THE OFFICE AND NEWSROOM, seems to reflect an editorial ven to present the new devices as attractive, high-tech gadgets; the subheads - such as "Others less pleased," "Fear of radiation," "Metal shields installed," "Complaints repeatedly raised," and "Some people more vulnerable?" -- show that Pinsley discovered and went after a less simple story. The peg was that The Record was scheduled to begin computerized production in June. The impetus for investigating the health and safety aspects of the new technology was a recent conference on computer terminal safety which had been cosponsored by two unions representing clerical and communications workers and which was held in Manhattan. "The conference, attended largely by workers with daily and daylong exposure to VDTs, produced a deluge of damning testimony," Pinsley wrote. "Most users complained about stinging, burning eyes, vision fatigue, headaches, and related symptoms."

To check on the validity of these complaints, Pinsley contacted Michael Smith, the industrial psychologist who heads NIOSH's section for motivation and stress research. Smith assured Pinsley that prolonged exposure to VDTs could lead to temporarily blurred vision; that eye fatigue is a genuine reaction to such exposure; that people who are partially color blind may have trouble distinguishing letters on some models; and that the flicker effect, which is produced as images on the screen are electronically "refreshed" dozens of times each second, causes stress. Pinsley noted that some manufacturers "tend to blame mainly the workers for the problems. . . . "

His treatment of the radiation issue began with a deft introduction:

The issue of radiation is at once thornier and more vague. It is clouded by emotionalism, a shaky federal standard, a lack of authoritative research on low level RF emissions, a lack of faith in the radiation monitoring devices currently in use, and a varying degree of public concern and candor among manufacturers.

Pinsley elicited several interesting quotes. Wordie Parr, a NIOSH radiation specialist, commented, for example: "We just don't think there's a radiation problem," but then went on to say, "To be quite honest, nobody knows a damn thing about that low a frequency." William Murray, chief of the NIOSH radiation section in Cincinnati, said: "I really can't tell you at what level RF radiation is dangerous." A spokesman for the Harris Corporation, a major producer of video display terminals, explained that while Harris tests its product for X-ray emissions (and has never obtained a positive reading), the firm does not test for radiation at the radio frequency level because it is convinced that this presents no hazard; and the spokesman added, "The VDT is an inherently safe product." Dr. Zaret's contrasting views on the subject were also set forth.

Pinsley concluded his prodigious roundup with a quote from Betsy Wade, president of Local 3 of The Newspaper Guild and assistant travel editor at *The New York Times*:



**Toronto scare:** After four former Toronto Star employees, who had worked in this room, bore children with serious birth defects, the VDTs were checked — and termed safe

"We don't know what we ought to know. The people who are buying these pieces of equipment don't know that much, either. What concerns me is that, whether we like it or not, we are becoming guinea pigs in a long-term experiment."

Asked whether his piece had been altered in any important way by editing, Pinsley replied, "There wasn't a great deal of enthusiasm for examining the safety and health issue at that depth, but not a single word of substance, certainly none relating to the health and safety question, was altered or removed. The story that went into the paper was just about precisely the story I handed in, and I was pretty pleased with that."

The special value of the Maclean's article, which appeared on July 28, 1980, lay not so much in its comprehensiveness as in its thoughtful analysis of the various effects the new computerized technology was having, and might be expected to have, on workers and society. The two-page article, entitled "A Worrying Case of the VDTs," was written by Larry Black, a labor reporter for The Canadian Press, Canada's leading wire service agency. It was "just luck," says Black, that a piece he had submitted in early July appeared in the newsweekly just as VDTs were making headlines in Toronto's dailies. Four former employees of the Toronto Star who had been working with VDTs during their pregnancies had given birth to children with birth defects; typical late-July headlines read: VDT OPERATORS WORRY AS EXPERTS POOH-POOH FEARS, and VDTs DIDN'T CAUSE AB-NORMALITIES, TORONTO REPORT SAYS.

Black's article begins with the observation that, while "the magical little green or black screens have been treated as just one of the more nifty byproducts of the computer revolution," questions were now being asked about "what the tubes are doing to offices and the people who work with them." He cites the complaint of a Vancouver copy editor

— "My brain sort of blacks out for an instant. I'm forced to abruptly look away from the screen to prevent passing out" — and then spells out findings, presented at an international conference of medical and industrial psychologists held in Milan last March, showing that 50 percent of a studied group of VDT users had reported eyestrain, 29 percent headaches, 43 percent anxiety, and 40 percent depression. After slipping through the radiation tangle, Black examines the effects on workers of the new technology. Particularly in the case of people employed by telephone companies and airlines, Black notes, the new machines are creating a sense of loss of control, of alienation from their work (a union organizer compares using a VDT to "sitting in front of a TV and reading credits seven-and-a-half hours a day"), and of isolation from their colleagues.

Another, perhaps larger, concern brought out in the article is that the new technology may cause "large-scale white collar unemployment and underemployment" — a point Black substantiates by referring to European studies indicating that "at least 25 percent of office workers . . . could be out of a job in a decade or so because of the tubes and their technological relatives." The impact, Black writes, may be "even more awesome for women, who are still heavily concentrated in clerical tasks in industries already permeated by microprocessor technology — banks, telecommunications and insurance companies, for example."

Returning to the health and safety issue at the end of his article, Black quotes an airline union organizer as predicting that "cathode-tube operators are going to be the asbestos workers of the future" — a concern voiced three months later at the conclusion of a more narrowly focused Wall Street Journal article on VDTs. (Staff writer Joann S. Lublin quotes a former Toronto Star employee who worked at VDTs during her pregnancy and who gave birth to a son with a nearly fatal heart defect as saying: "Any [one] of those machines doesn't give off enough radiation at a time to harm, but I wonder about the cumulative effects of radiation. . . . It just seems like we're going to be the asbestosis people of the future."

f the U.S. press were doing its job, one would not have to look to Canada for reporting that combines a succinct survey of the VDT health controversy with a broader look at the impact on society of the new computerized technology. What has happened here? The nation's newspapers are involved in a technological revolution; so, too, of course, are many other and much larger industries. This revolution is affecting the lives - and possibly adversely affecting the health - of thousands of journalists and millions of nonjournalists. At least some reporters are eager to cover various aspects of this large event, presumably in the same professional manner in which they would cover any other story. Meanwhile, there is a dearth of coverage. In some cases this may be because reporters genuinely do not see a story in VDTs. But it would not seem too farfetched to conclude that at the management level another factor is at work - that in their concern to protect a vast investment, editors and publishers are subordinating the public interest to a private one.

## **Everyman TV**

On Public Access, people do and say whatever they like. Why are efforts under way to kill it off?

by JEREMY WEIR ALDERSON

ow can anyone defend Public Access Television? Critics point out that "Access" (as it's called) has presented some of the worst conceived, worst produced programs in television's history, punctuated by sensational features like a transsexual's striptease, cock tattooing, and even a horrifying repeating loop of a puppy being shot to death. Nonetheless, Access has not only defenders but vigorous proponents who see in it vitality, honesty, variety, relevance, and television's brightest hope. At the root of these conflicting views is one central fact: Public Access Television is the world's only form of television in which no authority decides what can or cannot be televised. For better or worse, Access is the one place where people can televise almost anything they want.

Access arose from circumstances so prosaic that no one foresaw what they would produce. Those circumstances included the exasperating tendency of TV signals to bounce off Manhattan's skyscrapers, creating so many ghosts that the multiple images on many home screens could be cleaned up by no method short of exorcism. In 1965, two exorcists arrived in the guise of cable companies convinced that New York was ripe to become the first metropolis with cable television.

Because there were no appropriate precedents, the city moved cautiously, granting, at first, only temporary operating authority, so as to have time to study alternatives. The city felt it had the right to demand something from the cable companies in return for the city services and rights of way the companies would require. In 1970, after considering recommendations from almost every conceivable community source, the city and the cable companies settled on franchise contracts that included landmark provisions for Public Access.

In 1972, the FCC imposed modified Access requirements on all cable companies with 3,500 or more subscribers. Today, dozens of cable systems (no exact count is available) offer some form of Public Access. It flourishes in such diverse locations as San Diego, East Lansing, Michigan, and Ohio's Miami Valley, but in terms of the sheer quantity and variety of programming produced, New York City remains the leader.

Under New York's rules, transmission time on either of two Public Access channels (there are twenty-six cable channels in all) is available on a first-come-first-served basis for up to an hour per person per week. Regular time slots can be reserved, and there is no charge for use of the channels, but programs cannot carry advertising. On a third, so-called Leased Access channel, there is a nominal transmission fee (fifty dollars per hour per cable company), and commercial programs are permitted.

Though in some locales cable companies are required to provide production assistance, in New York they are required only to transmit, without interference, whatever programs the Access producers provide, either on tape or via live feed. There is just one exception to the noninterference rule: cable companies are not required to transmit material so obscene that they themselves might be prosecuted. Some producers fear the companies will use this loophole to get control of Public Access channels.

Access was a radical departure from the policy of previous eras in which no one had dreamed of demanding free public access to the printing press, telegraph, radio, or telephone. In theory, Access was to be a sort of televised Public Access programs available to New Yorkers, a few of which may be glimpsed on these pages, are marked by their quirkiness and rich variety



Midnight Blue claims to be television's first erotic variety show



Recent topics on this weekly talk show included "Backache: the Oldest Agony"



A stand-up comic on Comedy & Co., a weekly series, demonstrates "two-dimensional glasses"

Jeremy Weir Alderson is a free-lance writer living in upstate New York.



On Glen O'Brien's TV Party guests like this rock musician answer phoned-in questions



This special was titled In Response to Questions at Public Gatherings; the responder is philosopher J. Krishnamurti



On What's the Big Idea?, a showcase for inventors, a guest demonstrates a new cotton-picking tool



Lenox Hill hospital produced this special

Hyde Park in the center of the "Global Village," returning to the individual the opportunity to be heard that mass society had taken away. In practice, Access was greeted with more enthusiasm than anyone anticipated, as scores of would-be producers lined up to reserve time for their shows.

By 1974, the nonprofit Experimental Television Cooperative (ETC) had opened in a cramped lower-Manhattan loft. By relying on volunteers for labor, and by using undersized industrial or homemade equipment, ETC brought the cost of television production down to as little as twenty dollars per black-andwhite half hour. Though the technical inferiority of ETC-produced programming often turns off network-nurtured viewers (without capital, Access producers can only lament that if God Himself were to appear on Access most people would pass Him by as a lowbudget production), ETC's opening was a tremendous spur to Access's development in Manhattan, where most producers must pay production costs out of their own pockets.

Today, Manhattan's three Access channels present more than 300 programs each week, including almost as much original prime-time programming as the three networks combined. Most of these programs can't be seen beyond Manhattan, and, of course, many of them are awful, but, as one hardly need point out, many network programs are awful too.

Through Access, countless new writers, performers, and technicians have gained their first television experience. So many women, blacks, Hispanics, and members of other minorities have their own programs as to put network tokenism to shame. But Access is more than the sum of its opportunities or the "Vanity Video" for which it is sometimes mistaken. The viewing public, too, has benefited from Access. Despite its rampant amateurism, Access has redefined television's potential by creating new kinds of programming and a new television aesthetic.

"I think broadcasting is over," declares "Coca Crystal," whose popular program "If I Can't Dance You Can Keep Your Revolution" mixes drugs (she often smokes marijuana on camera), radical politics (no nukes, no draft, etc.), and black humor (e.g. an "ad" for "Sado-Maspirin" — increases your sensitivity to the lash), to form what she calls "an eighties version of an underground paper." "Making pabulum for the masses is finished," she continues with the characteristic fervor of an Access partisan. "I believe in narrowcasting."

"Narrowcasting" — gearing programs to a limited target audience — is possible on Access because of its small expense, and because a program doesn't have to be popular, or even potentially

'If God Himself
were to appear on Access
most people
would pass Him by
as a low-budget production'

popular, to be on Access. As a result, weekly programs are devoted to a seemingly endless list of topics seldom treated seriously by the networks, including astrology, consumerism, feminism, haute couture, salsa music, comic books, radio serials, gospel singing, sports handicapping, hypnotherapy, parapsychology, and even a little known theology called "Absolute Relativity."

Some of the better examples of New York's Access narrowcasts would be: Impact on Hunger, which each week deals with a different facet of world malnutrition, including starvation in New York City itself; The Irish Freedom Show, which regularly presents such features as an interview with an Irish socialist giving his party's platform for peace in Northern Ireland; and Towards Aquarius, hosted by ghetto activist "Kanya," who addresses such topics as . Harlem hospital closings, which he asserts are intended to drive blacks from the inner city to make way for white real estate development. Many Access advocates believe that programs like Kanya's, which tackle tough community issues, represent one of Access's greatest strengths.

Not all Access programs are narrowcasts. Many shows are intended for a mass audience and some of these, taking advantage of cable's less restrictive regulatory framework, present material that could never be broadcast. The best known examples of this genre are the sex shows, including: Midnight Blue, television's first "erotic variety show," whose executive producer is Al Goldstein of Screw magazine: The Uglv George Hour of Truth, Sex, and Violence, which consists in part of interviews with women whom George has lured off the street and talked into undressing on camera; and Maria At Midnight, hosted by stripper Maria Darvi, who hopes her Access exposure will one day land her a lucrative movie contract.

Not surprisingly, the sex shows have aroused a lot of censorious ire. At one point, Manhattan Cable Television threw Midnight Blue off its system for several weeks, and an outraged New York congressman played tapes of it for the House Communications subcommittee, demanding that this immorality be stopped. (At the moment, a fragile compromise has Access producers voluntarily sticking within the limits of an "R" rating.) But morality isn't the only issue. The Access sex shows are moving into a lucrative market that broadcasters can't directly enter. Midnight Blue is already being syndicated around the country, and Ugly George is seeking European distribution. Certainly the networks can have no enthusiasm for one day seeing Leased Access programs compete for audiences and advertising.

ven if one is not enthralled by the Access sex shows, one may see in them the price that must be paid for the salutary freedom that Access producers enjoy - a freedom that has been put to many nonpornographic uses. At a time when the networks still sought ways to "treat" the topic of homosexuality, Leased Access was regularly transmitting Emerald City, a well-crafted program which "started out to show anything gay," one producer said, and included scenes of men kissing, reviews of gay bathhouses, and anti-homophobia editorials. Though Emerald City caught on in New York and San Francisco, it died because it

couldn't expand into enough markets to command the ad rates it needed to survive. Where Leased Access rights were not legally guaranteed, *Emerald City* could not secure a regular time slot.

Waste Meat News is another now-defunct program which benefited from Access's free environment. It consisted entirely of skits satirizing a "typical" day of network television. One continuing skit was a supposed weather report entitled "Leather Weather," in which a bound, reclining woman in a kinky leather costume was used as a weather map, getting doused with water where it rained, covered with shaving cream where it snowed, etc. Some other skits featured:

☐ A consumer report on a "Foreign Language Cursing Detector," a must item for traveling xenophobes afraid that a foreigner might curse them out without their knowledge.

☐ An advertisement for a self-improvement school teaching the quality most necessary for success: meanness. ☐ A David Susskindian interview with the latest group to come out of the closet demanding recognition and respect: people who have murdered their spouses.

An adventure series, "Suicide Emergency Squad," in which three Charlie's Angelish women who (according to the intro) "really know how to stop a suicide and still turn on a TV audience" try to prevent a man from killing himself by eating a Burger King Whopper.

☐ A late-night movie, "Frightened At Sea," in which two World War Two submarine commanders track each other until they realize they're on the same ship.

☐ An "Incredible Hulk" type series entitled "Sewerman," about a child abandoned for safekeeping in Manhattan's sewers during the Cuban Missile Crisis, now grown up and prowling the city.

☐ An advertisement for a new phone company service, "Dial-A-Thrill," which offers callers pre-recorded messages appealing to every possible sexual appetite.

At least Waste Meat News came to a better end than Emerald City. Its creator, Ferris Butler, voluntarily withdrew it from circulation last fall when he was hired to write for the revamped



Coca Crystal lights a joint on her weekly program, If I Can't Dance You Can Keep Your Revolution



The Don Doyle Show takes up a different health problem each week



The subject of this Potato Wolf program was "City Wildlife"; the rat is eating a Big Mac



Manhattan Magazine, like many Access programs, is mainly talk, talk, talk

Saturday Night Live. Butler is quick to credit Access for his success: "The freedom to discuss things, to write on a wide variety of subject matter, enabled me to open up my creativity and use my talents better, and as a result, that helped me to move on to something else."

Taken together, the Access shows define a new television aesthetic — an aesthetic of reality, as opposed to the network aesthetic of illusion. On Access, people appear more natural, talk

'Despite
its many achievements,
the Access
concept is in deep trouble'

more freely, and address more issues of real concern than on any other form of television. To this may be added the spontaneity of the live transmissions preferred by many Access producers. Access is the true progenitor of programs like Saturday Night Live and Real People, but unlike the subjects of Real People the real people on Access don't need glib Hollywood types to introduce them and thus distance their own real lives from the real lives of their audience.

How many people are watching? Nobody knows for sure, because no rating service includes Access programs. There are, however, some interesting indications. A survey conducted in East Lansing showed that some people there subscribe to cable just to receive the Access programs. A Manhattan Cable Television survey profiled Access viewers as younger, better educated, and more upwardly mobile than average. Evidence that Access is finding a growing audience may be found in the rapidly overloading switchboards of some Access phone-in shows and the recognition that Access stars like Coca Crystal and Ugly George receive as they walk down the street.

Leonard Cohen, the coordinator of New York City's Office of Telecom-

munications, has dubbed the city's experiment with Access "an absolutely great success," but, despite its many achievements, the Access concept is in deep trouble. Cable companies, many of which are owned by giant conglomerates that also own pay-TV syndicates, were not happy when the FCC promulgated its Access requirements. They saw in Access the nuisance of dealing with dozens of local producers, and a large potential for pressure group complaints about controversial Access shows. Most importantly, they were reluctant to give up channels which, they hoped, would prove more lucrative carrying pay television services (often from their own parent companies) or free services (old movies, sports, news, etc.) that might be more effective than Access in attracting new subscribers.

In 1976, Midwest Video, a small cable company chain, sued the FCC to be freed from Public Access obligations. It won in the Supreme Court, which ruled that the FCC had exceeded its statutory authority in ordering Access, but the case had an unintended boomerang effect. Mike Botein, a New York Law School professor who fought on the losing side, says the decision "turned out to be one of the best things that ever happened to Access," because, after the Court ruled, local governments which had previously relied on the FCC started following New York's lead in insisting on Access as a franchise condition. As competition for cable franchises has heated up, local governments have frequently gotten more Access channels (and even Access studios) through negotiation than they would have under the FCC rules. Still, the battle is far from over.

For one thing, what's passing for Access in many places has little or nothing to do with the experiment started in New York. According to Sue Buske, the executive director of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP), a pro-Access umbrella group, "The cable companies are trying to blur the distinction between Local Origination [cable company controlled] and Access by introducing the concept of Community Programming, in which the topic is community oriented but is ultimately chosen and presented by the cable operator, not by the community."

Access has also been subverted by the imposition of rules that make Access time difficult to obtain or subject to the discretion of the cable operator.

In their determination not to be forced into giving up channels, even for limited Access, the cable companies have taken their fight to Congress. Last summer, with the before-the-fact advice and after-the-fact support of two cable company organizations - The National Cable Television Association and the Community Antenna Television Association - Senators Hollings, Cannon, Packwood, Stevens, Goldwater, and Schmitt introduced a bill (S.2827) that would have forbidden any level of government to "require or prohibit any program origination by a telecommunications carrier . . . or obligations affecting the content or amount of such program originations."

he NFLCP, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (currently chaired by Ralph Nader), the National League of Cities, and a host of other nonprofit organizations rushed to oppose S.2827, which was scheduled to come to a vote without a hearing. The bill's sponsors insisted that its provisions had been misread and that it had never been intended as an attempt to eliminate Access, but the bill's opponents simply did not believe that claim. Although S.2827 eventually stalled, many are still worried that the 97th Congress will produce its own brand of anti-Access legislation — a possibility that appears all the more likely in the light of Reagan's election and the conservative shift in Congress.

If Access survives, technological innovations may greatly expand its horizons. The increasing availability of satellite time would permit linked Access channels across the country to form an alternative distribution network, and the continued development of interactive (two-way) television could make Access an ideal medium for electronic town meetings. (Promising experiments in both of these directions have already been made.) Ironically, Access's dreams won't be fulfilled until the viewing public wakes up to what it has been missing. If that doesn't happen soon, television's brightest hope may be buried in the wasteland.



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A new black editor, bankrolled by Gannett, is out to prove that the *Tribune* can thrive without abandoning the inner city

by JOSEPH P. LYFORD

n the side of the bus as it rolls to a stop at the corner of Thirteenth and Franklin in downtown Oakland, California, is a huge sign advertising a hair-care product. The models on the poster are black. Of the thirty-three passengers who board the bus, one is white, two are Asian, two are Hispanic, and twenty-eight are black. This bus stop is also the site of the Oakland Tribune tower, a narrow, Italianate edifice capped by a greenish spire and four enormous and generally unreliable clocks. For many years the proprietors of the newspaper published here didn't get the message from the street. The Tribune may have been editorially gray, but mentally it was white-on-white.

Lately, however, a revolution has been taking place at the *Tribune*. The paper is under a new management, which is spending money in large quantities. Editorial policy has changed from ultraconservative to liberal, and a black man, Robert Maynard, has been made editor in chief. In the process, the city has found itself with the makings of a first-class newspaper. What remains to be seen is how long the Gannett Company, the new owner, will continue to back a recovery so promisingly begun.

Gannett and its new editor face a difficult task. Under the ownership of the Knowland family, and the close direction of their deputy in charge of the newspaper, Senator William F. Knowland, the *Tribune* had steadfastly refused to look the future in the eye. The

Something new for **Oakland** 

Joseph Lyford is professor of journalism at the University of California at Berkeley and the author of, among other books, The Airtight Cage.

Editor Robert Maynard

embittered senator, his political career at an end with his defeat for the governorship of California in 1958, sealed himself up in his office and more or less let the paper run itself. While the city changed, the *Tribune* stood still, operating very much as it had in the days when the senator's father had not only run the paper, but had also largely dominated the political and financial life of the city.

With nobody tending the store, the inevitable happened. As more and more of the Tribune's advertisers and readers moved to the suburbs, the Tribune made only the feeblest efforts to hold them. Meanwhile, it continued to ignore the minority communities that were developing rapidly in North, West, and East Oakland. In 1977, three years after a brooding Senator Knowland had killed himself, and with the paper's circulation dropping, the Knowlands decided to get out. The family sold the paper out from under the senator's son Joe for \$17.8 million to Combined Communications Corporation, a Phoenix-based conglomerate, whose properties included The Cincinnati Enquirer, seven TV stations, and a billboard empire.

The new owners were unable to halt the deterioration of the Tribune's financial situation, or to invigorate the paper editorially. But in June 1979, the Gannett Company took control of the Tribune, as part of a \$340-million package consisting of all of the Combined Communications properties, and set out to make the paper over. Gannett appointed Maynard and gave him the authority and money he would need to do the job. Since then, combined circulation of the Tribune and its morning offshoot, Eastbay Today, has gone up sharply. The most significant change, however, has been in the paper's approach to its readers and potential readers. Instead of writing off the poor and working-class residents of the city, as so many newspapers have done in recent years, Maynard is making a brave try at turning the Tribune into a true community newspaper - one that will serve (and perhaps even explain to one another) the mainly white East Bay suburbanites and the largely black and Hispanic population of the city proper.

Maynard and his management team have no illusions about the obstacles confronting them. They have firmly in mind that more than two-thirds of Oakland's population of 330,000 consists of minorities — including 146,000 blacks, 42,000 Hispanics, 23,000 Asians — that rely mainly on TV and radio for their news. Management is aware, too, that most of the minority population has little purchasing power, that the minority unemployment rate is close to 12 percent, and that more than a third of all young blacks and Hispanics in Oakland are without jobs.

At the same time, the managers of the Tribune argue that "Oakland is not Newark," and that the city has a bright economic future. This assumption is based on the conviction that because San Francisco, just across the bay, is overbuilt and prohibitively expensive, any further expansion of business activity in the area, including the construction of corporate headquarters, is bound to flow in Oakland's direction. "Oakland is the greatest undeveloped metropolitan land mass in the United States," says Maynard, "and it's in a very strategic area. That means it will have a growing advertising and population base that can support a strong newspaper."

eanwhile, the Tribune is engaging in a two-front war. It has gone after regional circulation by beefing up its suburban desks and putting out special suburban editions, and it is giving competing dailies a run for their money in the East-of-the-Bay bedroom towns. The other, more crucial front is on the Tribune's home grounds, where for years it had been losing readers to San Francisco's two dailies, the Chronicle and the Examiner. To recapture these readers, and to transform non-newspaper readers into Tribune subscribers, the paper has begun to develop a "community" style of journalism that appears to have a broad appeal. Father Oliver Lynch, of St. Elizabeth's, one of the biggest Catholic churches in Oakland, with a flock that is heavily Hispanic, says that the Tribune is "appealing to a broader reading base," and that, unlike the old Tribune, "which always seemed to be slanted in a certain political direction, this newspaper seems to be fair in its coverage of politics." The shift away from the pervasive political conservatism of the old Tribune does not seem to have alienated the city's businessmen. The new *Tribune*, says Blair Egli, vice president/manager of the main Oakland branch of the Bank of America, "is professional, it's balanced, and for the first time the paper is beginning to cover the business affairs of this city in an intelligent way."

The Tribune has also pleased many of its readers by pointing up signs of the city's resilience and vitality as a community, as well as reporting on its troubles. This is helping to chip away at a deep-rooted municipal inferiority complex that stems from Oakland's location within sight of the spectacular skyline of San Francisco — a city more than twice the size of Oakland that has an inexhaustible supply of one-liners about Oakland ("The most beautiful thing about Oakland is the view of San Francisco"), and two newspapers which, consciously or unconsciously, cultivate the impression that Oakland is the service entrance to the golden city across the

Robert Maynard, forty-three, is a trim, slightly built man with a casual yet elegant style about him. Intelligent and very professional, he is also in a broad sense an intensely moral person, a quality that has earned him widespread respect. "He refuses to become the property of any group in this town," a local black minister says. "He is in a camp of his own."

Born of Barbadian parents, Maynard grew up in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn and worked as a reporter for the Baltimore Afro-American and The York (Pennsylvania) Gazette and Daily. Later, after a Nieman fellowship at Harvard, he joined The Washington Post, where he reported on city and national affairs, wrote editorials, and served for a time as ombudsman. In the late 1970s he ran a training program for minority journalists at the University of California at Berkeley - a program whose principal sponsor is Gannett. When he learned that Gannett was about to buy the Tribune he applied for the editor's job and promptly

Maynard does not limit himself to the traditional duties associated with an editor's job. He is also a teacher, an ombudsman for his staff and his readers

(he writes a highly literate Sunday column in which he invites criticism of the paper), an explorer of neighborhoods, schools, issues, and cultures, and the paper's chief recruiter of editorial talent.

In trying to fill these diverse roles he has encountered criticism that he is spreading himself thin by making too many public appearances at the expense of tending to the paper. But the critics acknowledge that he has enhanced the quality and credibility of the paper simply by being on top of things, by knowing his staff intimately, and by accumulating an immense amount of knowledge about Oakland by seeking out and talking with its citizens.

good newspaper, Maynard says, is one that reflects the diverse interests of its community, and the simplest way to accomplish that goal is to populate the paper with people of different interests, ages, races — and sexes. So when he increased the *Tribune*'s editorial staff from 130 to 177 during his first year, at least two-thirds of the people he hired were women, well over half of them were members of an ethnic minority, most of them were young, and almost all of them were talented.

With this enlarged staff, Maynard has been able to assign reporters to do stories on Oakland's neighborhoods (some readers complain that the Tribune does not do enough of this), and to keep a much closer watch on the school system, on the police and the courts, and on the way Oakland's housing and redevelopment policies affect the city's social and financial structure. There are also stories in the paper from time to time about submerged people who have something important to say about life in the city: an invalid Afghan refugee telling of her experiences with government red tape, a black doctor who reveals that there are more Filipino than black doctors in the U.S., and a woman who describes from her own experience what national defense spending does to job opportunities for black youth in Oak-

"Ordinary people who are not connected with awesome institutions," Maynard has written in one of his columns, "have much to tell us about how our society works. Or fails to work." He went on to say:

Of all the people who need to listen carefully to all aspects of our community, none has that responsibility quite to the degree that the journalist does. Someplace in the past, for reasons largely forgotten, we drifted into the habit of equating press conferences by politicians with news. . . . In too many instances the journalism we practice fails to search for the heart of the community and thus mistakes the voices of "leaders" for the voices of people. We might not be able to prove here at the *Tribune* that this is a reversible trend in our field. . . . But . . . I know we must try.

One serious obstacle in the way of reversing the trend at the Tribune was a demoralized staff. Mike Libbey, who joined the paper in 1976, says, "I was really shocked. There were mornings when I did practically nothing except read the Chronicle front and back. There was a complete air of hopelessness." Moreover, when Maynard arrived at the Tribune there were two more or less distinct, and mutually suspicious, groups on the paper: the veterans of ten or more years, and younger people who had been hired during the last days of the Knowlands or under the Combined Communications regime. The forty new reporters and copy editors hired by Maynard soon formed a third faction.

Mixing these three groups was a ticklish business. Some of the veterans, for example, were outraged when some of the newcomers organized a shortlived minority caucus. Maynard succeeded in lessening the tension by such policies as "marrying" the promotion of a newly hired editor or reporter with that of an older person. And as the three groups became used to each other, there was a growing mutual respect, and the emergence of new groups based not on race, age, or sex, but on differing ideas of what a newspaper should be doing. This has created a new type of dissension, healthy in that it reflects a desire by the reporters to make the Tribune a better paper (in the pre-Gannett days the staff was too numb to think about such things), unhealthy in the sense that unresolved controversy inevitably breeds frustration.

The most serious argument — it is one that rages in many newspaper city rooms — has to do with coverage of local news. Cityside editors think that

the paper's main function is to provide a complete report on all spot news, and not to be caught short by the competition on fast-breaking stories. The editors who hold this point of view keep a weather eye on the *Chronicle* and the evening television news.

Some reporters claim that this attitude means that other news organizations are making the *Tribune*'s news decisions and that it discourages "enterprise journalism." "Cityside is so busy covering their ass, for fear that they might miss something," says one particularly incensed reporter, "that they don't respond to original ideas."

Other reporters are more charitable in their judgments. A young reporter, referring to one city editor, says, "He holds the paper together. He is our memory bank." But a content analysis of the newspaper would seem to support those who criticize cityside for not being more inventive. Except for certain subjects that are covered well — notably the courts, education, and city hall — the cityside portion of the paper has not realized its potential, and on occasion shows a lack of imagination and depth.

The simmering controversy over newsroom standards puts Maynard in a delicate position. He values his editors' ability to cover the waterfront and to put the flow of breaking news into some sort of perspective. At the same time, judging from everything he has written or said, he cannot be satisfied with this covering-all-bases approach. He has responded to the situation in two ways. He has allowed his reporters free access to his office to discuss story ideas. And he has appointed a metropolitan editor closely in tune with his own thinking who has final say over the local news product.

veteran and highly respected reporter is talking: "Chains? I still don't trust them. They treat their newspapers like cash registers. There's always a bottom line for Gannett. I understand that the editor of the Honolulu Star Bulletin is already complaining about the Tribune's budget."

This sort of talk annoys Bill Mungo, the executive editor. He is tired of hearing people describe Gannett as a money-grubbing operation. "I have been on six Gannett papers and every



'For much
of the past year
Eastbay Today
was the fastest
growing newspaper
in America'

one of them was far more professional after we got through with them," he says. "We'd kick up the newshole, organize bureaus, hire more people."

Not everyone would agree with this sanguine view of Gannett's operations. But there is reason to think that the new owners' intentions toward the Tribune are honorable. For one thing, Gannett's chairman and president, Allen Neuharth, seems eager to establish himself firmly in a major metropolitan market; according to the Tribune's new publisher, Al Dolata, he is more enthusiastic about the making over of the Tribune than any project since the launching of Today, the highly successful daily that Gannett founded in Cocoa, Florida, in 1966 to cater to the area around Cape Kennedy. Moreover, people at the Tribune are encouraged by Neuharth's strong commitment to affirmative action, and by the fact that in Oakland he has a chance to show dramatically that staffing a paper heavily with blacks and Hispanics (and women) is quite compatible with putting out a superior - and profitable - product.

To expand its bridgehead in the East Bay area, and to compete more effectively with the *Tribune*'s powerful cross-bay rival, the morning *Chronicle* (circulation: 507,000), Gannett founded a morning paper of its own, *Eastbay* 

Today; it appeared on the newsracks on November 5, 1979, just sixty-six days after Gannett took over publication of the Tribune. Directly under Maynard's control and sharing the same staff, Eastbay Today is an abbreviated early version of the Tribune. Designed for easy reading and selling for a dime, like its Gannett prototype Westchester Today, it features international and national news, plus a full sports section and the most complete financial section in the Bay Area.

For much of the past year Eastbay Today was the fastest growing newspaper in America, and by November 1980 its circulation was approaching 68,000. While some of its readers have switched from the Chronicle and the East Bay Contra Costa Times, most people who are buying the paper appear to be new newspaper readers, or people who are buying a second paper. Advertisers in the afternoon Tribune automatically get the same space in Eastbay Today at no extra charge, and Gannett can offer them a combined circulation of just over 200,000. (There is no evidence, the management is quick to point out, that Eastbay Today is stealing readers from the Tribune.)

Marketing director Jim Rowley won't say how much Gannett has spent to promote Eastbay Today. But he notes

that there was an advertising blitz that "utilized just about everything that moved — buses, BART trains, a blimp," as well as house ads and radio and TV spots. Gannett also set up thousands of newsracks at \$200 apiece, bought a fleet of delivery trucks, and recruited several dozen platoons of teenagers for street sales. Sources at the *Tribune* place the cost of the blitz at well over \$1 million, and Gannett is reported ready to spend \$3 million more.

Advertisers seem to be responding. Full-run advertising linage for the first ten months of 1980 was up 2.4 percent over 1979, and zoned advertising in the *Tribune*'s new suburban editions was up 3.5 percent.

A good deal about the new Tribune may be learned from the way it handled the three most important running stories in its first year as a Gannett newspaper. The first of these was the debate over the establishment of a police complaint board. The second had to do with a \$200-million downtown renewal project called Hong Kong/USA (most of the money came from Hong Kong investors). The third story was about alleged irregularities in the spending of \$2.5 million in public funds by the Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal (OCCUR). continued



'The trouble
with the *Tribune*was that it
explained the what,
the where,
the when, and
the how about
OCCUR, but it didn't
explain the why'

Curtis Royce Jones

An ex-newspaperman turned community organizer, Jones is a close student of the new Tribune

In other cities the issue of a civilian review board for police agencies has usually exacerbated already serious racial and political tensions. For a while it looked as if that would happen in Oakland. Certainly all the elements for an explosive conflict were present: in the space of a year Oakland police were involved in seventeen shootings, nine of them fatal, in which fifteen of the seventeen victims were black.

But the controversy over the police complaint board actually brought the city's residents — and the police and the black community — closer together, and when the debate was over the city had a complaint board it could live with. The single greatest force in bringing this about, in the view of many people whose opinions count in the black community, was the *Tribune*.

Maynard assigned two experienced reporters to cover the story — a Hispanic male and a white female, each with a different set of sources. The *Tribune*'s editorials on the subject confined themselves to the pros and cons without taking sides. Then Maynard ferreted out comments from both sides, which he ran on the editorial page. Maynard himself contributed to the dialogue by devoting two of his Sunday columns to the issue. One of these, written after an angry meeting of 2,000

people, was an eloquent appeal for understanding on both sides, with a promise from Maynard that the paper would do everything in its power to promote a sense of "shared experience" among the people of Oakland by having his reporters go into neighborhoods and write about them firsthand.

William Muir, professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley, and a frequent writer on police affairs, cites the *Tribune*'s coverage of the controversy over the police complaint board as, in itself, a good example of the shared experience that Maynard is aiming at. "When the mayor and the city council couldn't cope with well-meaning groups who were talking past each other," he says, "the *Tribune* got them to walk in each other's shoes."

Coverage of the Hong Kong/USA story offered a vivid contrast between the old and the new *Tribune*. Before Maynard's arrival the projected redevelopment for commercial purposes of four blocks in downtown Oakland had been covered by rewriting press releases from the city manager and Sunrise California, Inc., the developer.

The action began when Maynard hired, as business editor, William Wong of the San Francisco bureau of *The Wall Street Journal*. Wong had a reputation

for being hard-nosed about facts and figures, and the vagueness of the Hong Kong/USA story bothered him. Before long he had gotten wind of the fact that the head developer was involved in a lawsuit with a bank in Singapore, which claimed that he had defrauded it of \$65 million.

After the *Tribune* broke the story, the head developer withdrew, the Hong Kong investors decided to hold up future payments, and construction was halted pending a complete refinancing of the project. Meanwhile, Wong sent a reporter to Hong Kong to tail the city manager, who was there on a rescue mission. Subsequent *Tribune* stories described a series of financial maneuverings that reached throughout southeast Asia and involved at least one giant multinational corporation.

The result of this reporting, according to Maynard, is that "questions are being asked now that, had they been asked a long time ago, would have saved the city a lot of time and expense. . . . Now we are stuck with these big holes in the ground." But in the end the *Tribune* has probably helped rather than hindered the completion of Hong Kong/USA by making the sponsors and the city take a closer look at initial assumptions, and by forcing them to scale the project down to manageable proportions. New

financing, from Asian sources of a more stable nature, has been found, and construction resumed last November.

In contrast to the *Tribune*'s excellent coverage of the police complaint board and Hong Kong/USA stories, its reporting of the third running story was anything but distinguished.

The agency, OCCUR, that had come under fire was the principal contractor for CETA funds in Oakland, and the recipient of other city, state, and federal grants for neighborhood rehabilitation. Long before Gannett acquired the *Tribune*, there were indications that something was amiss at OCCUR. In 1977, when its board attempted to fire the black executive director for alleged misuse of funds, the board was relieved of its duties in a mysterious manner by a prominent black politican who proceeded to pick a new board made up of friends of the executive director.

Later, the chairman of this new board of directors resigned, charging that the executive director had failed to inform the board of a huge and growing debt. Soon afterward, city auditors alleged that OCCUR had never established a proper basis for accounting practices. that the agency was behind in its social security payments, and that some funds had been diverted from intended uses. Next, the federal government placed a \$169,056 tax lien on OCCUR for back social security. Finally, on the heels of another city audit disallowing \$57,682 in expenditures and questioning an additional \$357,100, a grand jury subpoenaed OCCUR records on suspicion of conspiracy to defraud, making false claims to the government, and making false statements to government investigating agencies such as the FBI.

t wasn't that the *Tribune* didn't report all of these matters faithfully. But it simply followed the story as it was developed by others; its own role was completely passive. Never once did the *Tribune* — or, for that matter, the city or the federal government — make a serious attempt to determine whether the programs on which the \$2.5 million was spent, rightly or wrongly, were effective or were a giant ripoff. That was too bad, because the story had to do with an important question that has plagued every American city: how to di-

rect effectively, and without terrible waste, the partnership between federal, state, and city governments entrusted with expenditures of billions of dollars of public funds.

Why did the Tribune cover the story as it did? Some critics think the tactics of OCCUR had something to do with the paper's passivity. The black power structure, which rushed to OCCUR's defense, took the position that criticism of OCCUR was racially motivated. This strategy had two objectives: it was a bald warning to white reporters to lay off, and a not-so-subtle hint to a black mayor and a black newspaper editor to proceed with caution lest they be seen as doing a hatchet job for the white community. Maynard, who seems unlikely to be intimidated by such tactics, concedes that the Tribune could have been more aggressive. "But where would more aggressive reporting have gotten us?" he asks. "We found sloppy bookkeeping, no evidence of criminal activity, nothing that would justify us in making an investment of one or two reporters over a long period of time."

A different reason for the *Tribune*'s handling of the story is given by Curtis Royce Jones, a staff member of Oakland Community Organizations, a highly effective agency which acts as an umbrella for 150 grass-roots groups that interest themselves in preventing crime, restoring neighborhoods, and organizing residents to take direct action to control their own destinies.

Jones is a thirty-year-old black exnewspaperman. He was born and brought up in East Oakland, where neighborhood deterioration is a perennial problem. Although he thinks the *Tribune* is greatly improved (his organization gave the paper its community service award last year), he finds it weak in one respect.

"Much of the reporting on OCCUR was shallow and misleading because the reporters don't know the town yet," he says. "I see too much in the *Tribune* that's reflecting opinions, not facts — opinions that the reporters derive from so-called community leaders. That is why there is so much misunderstanding of the minority community in Oakland, why OCCUR gets away with comparing Oakland to Miami, saying that if it weren't for us Oakland would blow up

any moment. Where is this mystical army of malcontents? I don't see them. The essential fact about the black community [in Oakland] is that people here believe in the system and want to make it work for them. The trouble with the *Tribune* was that it explained the what, the where, the when, and the how about OCCUR, but it didn't explain the why."

aynard would be the first to say that the Tribune has some distance to go before it becomes a truly effective community newspaper. But it is on the way. There is a new and lively spirit on the paper. Reporters have been encouraged to be creative, and this has given them a new respect for themselves and their profession. The experience of those reporters who have been turned loose to explore the city's neighborhoods has quickened their curiosity about their city - an interest that has been returned in the form of suggestions, criticisms, and ideas by people who at last see a newspaper they can take seriously.

While none of these gains would have been possible without the infusion of Gannett money, a rich uncle alone would not have been enough. Most metropolitan newspapers these days have a lot of money, but many of them are dull, unimaginative, and committed to a brand of secondhand news that does not touch upon those subtle aspects of a community life that determine the character of cities.

The decisive factor in the changes at the *Tribune* has been Maynard. He has developed a set of journalistic principles that have caught the imagination of his staff. If he can put them into daily practice, and if he does not allow his activities as a public figure to distract him from the business at hand, then the *Tribune* can be an exception — a newspaper that has not abandoned the inner city in its pursuit of suburbia, but has intensified its search for the heart of the multi-racial community whose name it bears.

Given time and money, the odds that Maynard will turn the *Tribune* into that kind of a newspaper are good. Whether Gannett will give him that time and money is anybody's guess. A lot of people in Oakland are pulling hard for him to make it happen.

## "If all Printers were determin'd not to print any thing till they were sure it would offend no body, there would be very little printed."

Benjamin Franklin

## NORTHROP

Making advanced technology work.

## 'And then he was gone...'

But in political journalism, the Lone Ranger rides on

by ROBERT L. KING



To the radio generation, "he was gone" recalls the warm, familiar ending of *The Lone Ranger*, the good guy who saved the town for lesser folk only to go off by himself, ironically out of place in the new order he had created. "Where's

the Masked Man?", some naif among the redeemed would ask, and the slightly incredulous reply (after a suitable pause) was invariably the same, "Why, he's gone." Then, to the rising theme music, the citizenry would find out what the listener knew from the start - that man was indeed the Lone Ranger. Of course, he couldn't have lingered very long in one place without ruining the series, but all those abrupt, unannounced departures became powerful signals of his moral superiority. We were never quite good enough to hang onto him for long, and we never knew how good he was until we lost him.

The Lone Ranger may have vanished from the airwaves, but he still rides through the prose of American political writers. A careful reading, for example, of Elizabeth Drew's 1974 New Yorker account of Nixon's departure from the White House reveals the unmistakable outlines of the old hero:

As the President boards the helicopter, he stands in the doorway, faces the crowd, and shoots his arms in the air, the fingers of both hands shaping the characteristic "V"s. The helicopter lifts off into the gray sky, circles over the Jefferson Memorial, disappears momentarily behind the Washington Monument, and is gone. Nixon seems to have just floated away.

Lacking a sunset, Drew makes do with a gray sky; like the masked man, her Nixon ''disappears'' and ''is gone,'' but only after he is portrayed as the active agent who ''boards . . . stands . . . faces . . . and shoots.'' All pretty positive stuff for a man in disgrace.

Both Newsweek and The Final Days

edited Nixon's televised remarks to the White House staff in order to create a favorable context for their use of the same trite formula. Woodward and Bernstein force a parallel between his style and theirs, virtually fusing them:

"And so, we leave with high hopes, in good spirits and with deep humility, and with very much gratefulness in our hearts. . . ."

And he was gone. [Their ellipsis; my

Newsweek selected another passage from Nixon's remarks:

He spoke with thickening voice of his past and his future — "Only if you have been in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain."

And then he was gone, walking down a red carpet on the south lawn to his helicopter Army One.



By editing Nixon to make "highest mountain" his closing image, Newsweek collaborated with him to accentuate the notion of heroic stature; actually, many minutes passed

between "highest mountain" and the helicopter lift-off.

Last summer, Elizabeth Drew reverted to the stock image in describing the scene after Senator Kennedy's address to the Democratic convention:

The applause goes on and on. Kennedy comes back to the podium to acknowledge it a few times, waves briefly to the crowd, and is gone.

The very syntax is reminiscent of Drew's style in writing about Nixon; Kennedy is the agent, the subject of active verbs, the only name before a "crowd." At the end of the sentence, the identical words are applied to him as before: "and is gone."

*Time* varied the pattern, but the tough loner survives — and departs.

Kennedy . . . walked stiffly onto the crowded stage and tentatively shook the hand of the President, who patted his back. For a moment, Kennedy was hugged by O'Neill,

while Carter shot him quick, anxious glances. After another fleeting handshake, Kennedy patted the President and moved offstage. He was called back by aides to pose for pictures beside the President. Then he was gone. There was no warmth, no clasped hands held high.

Like Alan Ladd in *Shane* and dozens of other heroes, Kennedy cannot enjoy the moment of triumph. Some life, some warmth, leaves with him, and finally, he cannot be "called back." In *Newsweek*, as in *Time*, Kennedy "finally . . . appeared," with the variation that he goes "plunging into the night" after he leaves:

Finally, Senator Kennedy appeared, striding tight-lipped through the joyous crush to shake the President's hand and wave solemnly at the throng. . . . After barely three minutes Kennedy tried to leave; the roar of the crowd — louder than it had been for Carter — brought him back for one last, brief pose with the President. And then he was gone, plunging into the night as the band played "We Shall Overcome."

Besides the he-was-gone formula, other diction recalls the lone hero, someone "striding tight-lipped" who gives us a "wave" just before "one last, brief" view of him. Like more clearly fictional heroes, Kennedy gets concluding theme music; in his case, it is a hymn rich in associations for the true liberal.



Writing to a deadline, reporters will inevitably grasp at a cliché or two, and critics are foolish and unfair to impose literary standards on professionals caught

up in the dailiness of their craft. Most clichés insinuate no point of view, but the loner formula is more than simply a verbal convenience; unlike most stock expressions, its use by a journalist is irresponsible because it suggests a false sentimentality that the harsher reality does not allow. Image builders in Washington should not have co-conspirators in the media to help them work their dubious trade.

Robert King teaches English at the Elms College in Chicopee, Massachusetts.

## It Can Happen Here.

t was a quiet April evening, shortly before midnight, and Deanna Ussery had already gone to bed. The house was dark except for a nightlight in the bedroom of her eight-year-old daughter, Sheila Ann.

Suddenly, there was an explosion of gunfire, and 12-gauge shotgun slugs shattered Sheila Ann's bedroom windows, ripping her bedspread and tearing holes in the wall just above her bed. Miraculously, no one was hurt. Sheila Ann was away for the night.

A made for TV movie? No, a real-life story of terror in Hot Springs, Arkansas, as set forth in the official record of a trial against a United Steelworkers of America local in Garland County Circuit Court.

It is a story of union violence and harassment against five courageous women who defied the strike orders handed down by officials of a USW local against National Rejectors, Inc. of Hot Springs.

Even after the strike was over, the women were subjected to name calling, obscene language and threats. Glue or grease was rubbed on their chair seats at work. Supervisors had to accompany them to the bathroom for their protection.

There were repeated incidents of hair-pulling, shoving, slapping and tire-slashing. They were pursued in their cars by thugs who tried to run them off the road.

The terror might have continued for many more months if it hadn't been for the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. The Foundation is the only publicly supported charitable institution in America organized solely to provide free legal aid to employees whose rights have been violated because of abuses resulting from compulsory unionism.

After being asked for help, Founda-

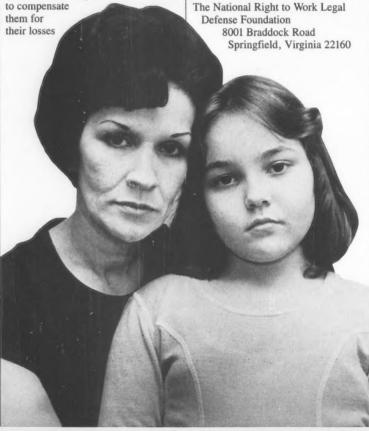
tion attorneys immediately filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board, demanding an end to the campaign of intimidation and terror. The Board swiftly responded and the union publicly promised not to engage in such activities in the future if the NLRB agreed not to prosecute.

With the Foundation's assistance, the five women also brought suit against the union and its officers in the Arkansas state court. In May 1980, a trial court jury awarded them a total of \$250,000 in damages

and suffering, and to punish the union for its lawlessness.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is currently helping American workers in more than 100 cases across the country, ranging from other union violence cases to those involving academic and political freedom and other fundamental rights. But it would like to do even more.

If you'd like to help Deanna Ussery and other workers like her, we'd like to hear from you.



## Science hits the newsstand

There's a whole new batch of science magazines. Why can't they have more bite?

by WILLIAM BENNETT

The American people are headed "toward virtual scientific and technological illiteracy," says a report from the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education. If Americans persist in this dismal direction, it won't be for lack of opportunity to read about science. In the past couple of years, a new magazine of popular science, or a gussied-up version of an old one, has entered the market about once every five months - and there are more to come. On a guess, the new publications are now selling some two million copies a month. Somebody must be buying (and, we can only infer, reading) them.

As plans for one new science magazine after another were announced - or leaked - during 1979 and 1980, many observers questioned whether the potential audience was large enough, whatever its composition, to support them all. There were auguries - successful television shows or series, books, individual magazine issues stressing science — to indicate that the public's appetite for the subject was not being satisfied by such scientifically flavored magazines as Smithsonian and Psychology Today, or by Scientific American. For nearly forty years Scientific American, with its more than 700,000 readers, had been the generalinterest magazine about science. Now it was seen as something of a dinosaur doing its same old thing, but more ponderously than ever - and the moment seemed right for hot-blooded competitors to enter the field with magazines

William Bennett is president of the board of directors of Harvard Magazine, for which he writes a column called "The Science Watch." that would take a less austere approach to the same subject matter.

So far, the dinosaur's aggressive competitors seem to be doing all right. Instead of rushing lemmingwise to an early, collective, and headlong demise, they have probably helped each other get started. Heavy promotion of individual magazines has drawn attention to all of them. Advertising agencies could begin to formulate a policy on purchasing space in the science books. Newsstands could group them rather than puzzle over where to put the odd science item. Readers could choose from a smorgasbord of attitudes and approaches to popular science.

As it turns out, the magazines have emerged with distinct personalities, and so they may succeed in appealing to different types of readers and not wind up competing for the same audience. So far, however, little is known about who is reading the new magazines other than that roughly three-quarters of the subscribers are males, with a median age in the thirties and a median income in the middle to high twenties. As yet, it is unclear whether they are drawn from the truly "general" public or come, rather, from a narrower segment that has some professional connection with science or technology.

hat is clear is that virtually all the magazines are selling a lot of copies and advertising. If any of them fails, the cause will not be public apathy or aversion to the subject matter. It will not be the unwillingness of advertisers to buy space in a science magazine. It will be because the magazines have fallen short of the promises they have made: to report science news, to entertain, to supplement the political education of citizens living in a highly technological environment, to help their readers acquire a scientific view of the world.

Omni — the brainchild of Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione — was the first of the new science magazines to appear (in 1978), and today it is the fattest. Each monthly issue delivers science fic-

tion, nonfiction, an interview, columns, and brief news items to 800,000 purchasers. This mixed bag is held together by an editorial policy which decrees that everything in the magazine will focus on the future, will emphasize space, and will be unabashedly entertaining, if not amusing. As *Omni*'s executive editor, Ben Bova, remarked in a telephone interview, "The other magazines are offering to make spinach palatable; we're offering strawberry shortcake."

The fiction in Omni is often delectable and occasionally even nourishing. Some of its nonfiction is the standard stuff of popularized physics or astronomy spinach soufflé, perhaps. But the futuristic articles, which dominated Omni's second anniversary issue, are even fluffier. Because nothing in particular is known about the future, articles on the subject must be confined to safe generalizations and concocted scenarios. It is really very difficult to say anything new about the future, as the anniversary issue made evident. A case in point was David Rorvik's rehash of arguments about the future of human genetic engineering ("to some . . . a forbidden act of cosmic masturbation: man with his hands down his genes. fiddling with himself"). It was titillating to find an article by Rorvik, who has not been much in evidence since publication of his notorious book, In His Image: The Cloning of a Man, but the message of his article - that it will not be easy for humanity to control its genetic destiny - proved to be as banal as his genes-jeans pun. The same issue carried a bland article on the future of human behavior ("There will be less to remember as more facts go into institutional and personal computers . . . '') and one on the future of automation that ranged from the vacuous ("Even if our entry into the future goes smoothly, robots will not bring utopia") to the risible ("Robots will bring in an age of universal prosperity").

Since it began, *Omni* has become more political, and there is something a shade ominous about the result. Mostly, *Omni*'s politics have been limited to advocating renewed space exploration, but

# Some say the answer is oil exploration. Some say the answer is conservation. For once, everybody is right.

It is exploration. It is conservation. It is alternate energy sources. And it's more.

We've also got to realize that our economic growth doesn't have

to be linked with excessive energy use. And with waste.

Without question, we must find more oil.

cost billions. But the money is available.

Even so, the most forceful domestic program won't be enough to meet the coming demand.

Nobody uses as much oil as America. Oil provides half of our energy needs. And half of that goes into transportation.

Smaller cars help. So do mileage standards. And we're getting there. But we still have a long way to go.

Right now, there's no economical

substitute for oil as a transportation fuel. So we will continue to use it. But coal, nuclear and solar are just as good for other energy needs. And they are much more plentiful.

Energy is the issue of our time. The action we take now will decide our future. At least Atlantic Richfield thinks so.

where do we start?
Scientists say there are billions
of barrels of oil still undiscovered in the
United States. We have the technology

to find it.

And we must learn to use

the oil we have efficiently. So

Exploration and development will

There are no easy answers.

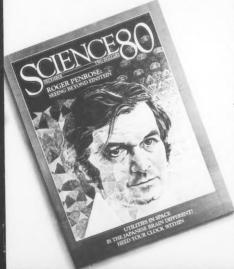
ARCO +

Atlantic Richfield Company

as the last election approached, the magazine upped its ante. In the November issue, it went so far as to print a hit list of members of Congress who had voted against key space bills a bizarre example of one-issue politics, though not an isolated one in last year's election. In the same issue, Omni also ran an article reporting a computer projection that compared the potential effect on the economy of the Republican and Democratic platforms. Computer and article tilted heavily toward the Republicans, and it required careful reading to find a buried warning that the computer's program was quite inadequate for the job it was asked to do, from which the reader could infer that the projection was nonsense.

Science 80 (now Science 81) began about a year after Omni. Published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, it is the creature of Allen Hammond, formerly editor of "Research News" at Science, and it is very different from the Penthouse product. Whereas Omni puts little emphasis on the straight science feature story, the core of Science 81 is its feature articles. And whereas Omni comes on with glitzy design, covers that look like sketches for pinball-machine boards, and a near-total absence of recognizably human beings outside its advertising pages, Science 81 is conservative in design, pushes the human element in its content and illustrations, and focuses on reality rather than speculation. Omni is sold mainly on newsstands; most of Science 81's 500,000 readers subscribe.

Science 81, which comes out ten



times a year, maintains a high level of scientific respectability and cultivates a generally orthodox approach to its subject matter. The magazine often uses scientists as referees to verify its content but relies on free-lancers to write the articles because its goal is a quality of writing that scientists, by and large, don't achieve.

he result is about as good as it could be, given the utter straightness of the magazine's conception and execution. But by depending so heavily on science features, Science 81 suffers, perhaps more conspicuously than its competitors, from the limitations of the genre.

Like the scientific report, which strictly adheres to a pattern (Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Conclusions), the science feature is rigidly structured. It begins with a catchy Lead. Here are some improvised examples:

☐ The bit of bogus narrative. At 8 A.M., Dr. Schmalhals put on his impeccably starched white lab coat and contemplated death. In a few minutes he would sacrifice fifty impeccably groomed white laboratory rats in the hope of saving a sick child.

☐ The disarming paradox. White flowers are really a riot of color — if you happen to be a honey bee.

☐ The accumulation of persuasive detail. The Embden-Meyerhof glacier weighs seventy thousand million tons—small as glaciers go. It consists largely of ice, solid water, or H<sub>2</sub>O as chemists call it, mixed with rock and sand, SiO<sub>2</sub>. Located at 64°17′ north latitude and 44°55′ west longitude, this post-Pleistocene juggernaut moves at the rate of six inches a month. (So does the article.)

☐ The flatfooted exclamation. Paleontologists were astounded when the first fragments of ark were recovered from sedimentary strata on Mt. Ararat.

As in a classical sonata, there follows the Development — often a way to make up for the lead by stating what the article is really about, and, in any case, necessary because science has to be about something. Next is the Explanation, in which something difficult is made easy. Otherwise, why write a science feature at all? And finally, comes



the Kicker or Tag — all too often a quotation ("Nevertheless," Dr. Schmalhals gently repeats, "I like rats"), a homily (Thanks to flowers, bees make life a sweeter, if riskier, experience than it would be without them), or a threat (If we all go on breathing at our present rate, there simply will be no glaciers left for our grandchildren to read about).

It's a tough choice. Scientists, with few exceptions, write encyclopedia entries. Science writers, with few exceptions, write feature articles. The latter may be decorative, but they are often sterile and timid. The reason may be that the writer doesn't have the scientist's freedom to express opinions on scientific subjects. A pair of instructive examples appeared last November. Lynn Margulis, a biologist at Boston University, felt free to assert in The Sciences, a small, provocative, and readable magazine (circulation: 50,000) published by The New York Academy of Sciences, that the Viking missions revealed "the certain barrenness of Mars." Margulis supported her contention that no life exists on the planet with a pungent and authoritative, if opinionated, assessment of the evidence. The same month. Science 80 carried a short piece on the same subject by Trudy E. Bell, one of the best and most professional science writers in the business. Her conclusion: "We still do not know if there is life on Mars, and maybe it is impossible to tell on the basis of the Viking missions alone. But one thing is clear: The question will not go away."

I don't know how to resolve the problem. As long as scientists choose not to be journalists and journalists are expected to maintain an often artificial "balance," science features are likely to be wishy-washy or to convey a naiveté that belies their authors' intelligence.

Naiveté is an occasional and unintentional by-product of the journalistic style adopted in *Science 81*. In *Science Digest*, a monthly that claims a circulation of 500,000, it is central to the conception of the magazine. *Science Digest* is the Hearst Corporation's entry in the science sweepstakes. Edited by Scott DeGarmo, a journalist with prior experience editing Sunday supplements, it is an altogether new magazine to which Hearst has given the title of an older, pocket-sized publication that it uncere-

moniously axed when newsstand trials showed that the new product would sell. (Although its masthead lists me as an editorial adviser, I have had no advisory connection whatever with the new *Science Digest*.) Covers of the new incarnation have more than once featured the sculptured image of a vacant-eyed head. The editorial approach, however, is merely wide-eyed.

For example, an article in the "Premiere Issue" characterized the first living creatures as "happy, self-reproducing globs," then went on to a breezy synopsis of the physiology of body fluids. Other pieces in the same issue

were also devoted to basic information in a gushy, brave-new-world presentation reminiscent of high-school textbooks. No harm in that, and many readers may be grateful.

Science Digest's other specialty promised to be sex. The premiere issue ran several major pieces on sex — the significance of face-to-face positioning, the uninhibited mores of the Lepcha people of Sikkim, a rhapsody on the achievements of Masters and Johnson — and the subject cropped up in odds and ends elsewhere in the issue. Also scattered through it were some quirky pieces that I found more diverting than

#### TV science: fun, games, UFOs — and Cosmos

Inspired in part by the early success of the new science magazines, several new science television series are in various stages of development.

After more than two years of planning, CBS is moving forward with its Universe series, to be aired this summer. The thirteen half-hour, newsmagazine programs will be presided over by Walter Cronkite, who is considered the show's prime mover and who retires from CBS Evening News in March. After a pilot in June 1979, four more shows appeared last summer, and their tone and content were in general somewhat frivolous. This was partly, staff members suggest, because of a deliberate effort to appeal to CBS management and partly, perhaps, because puns and fun seem to be the trademark of executive producer Jonathan Ward, formerly a producer of science material for CBS Evening News. Segments of Universe that were aired last summer. for example, showed scientists measuring the crunch in processed foods, trying to induce a zoo gorilla to mate with a partner suffering from a bad toothache, and test marketing political speeches by computer ("machine politics"). According to Ward, Cronkite "roundly criticized" the triviality, and there will be more sobriety in future.

As for ratings, the four Universe

shows more or less held their own against their network rivals, reruns of 240-Robert and BJ and the Bear, at the unlikely time of 8:00 Saturday night in July and August, and advertisers are keenly interested. For insurance companies and technological industry, a science program promises to deliver the right prestige to the right (young, professional) audience.

In the meantime, ABC is also proceeding hesitantly with a science series, called Quest. Like Universe, Quest will contain about three segments per show, but it will be one hour long and, at first, will probably appear monthly rather than weekly. Also like Universe. Ouest will probably compete for prime-time ratings by emphasizing the entertaining side of science — oddities, adventure, human interest. According to executive producer Jeffrey Pill, segments have been completed, for instance, on "a scientific explanation for most UFO sightings," "the scientific examination of astrology," and the behavior of hammerhead sharks. Unlike Universe, however, Quest will make no attempt to provide background on the scientific aspects of current political issues. So far, NBC has announced no plans for a science show.

While the commercial networks are gearing up to offer a little science to large audiences, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations are providing increasing amounts of science to their

smaller audiences. This past fall the PBS schedule was riddled with science: Nova, the grandfather of science series, in its seventh season with a variety of subjects, from interferon to Edison, in a variety of styles, from stodgy to stimulating; reruns of Connections, the engaging ten-part series in which British Broadcasting Corporation science editor James Burke traces the unlikely links between society and its inventions, past and present; and The Body in Question, in which British physician and writer Jonathan Miller explores the human body, literally, irreverently, speculatively, and philosophically.

he show that people were talking about in the fall, however, was Cosmos. Cover stories in Time, Saturday Review, TV Guide, and other publications heralded the thirteen-part extravaganza, a celebration of the universe and of the scientific approach to learning about it, featuring the widely known Cornell University astronomer Carl Sagan. With so much hype, there was a good chance that the actual results would be something of a letdown, and occasionally they were. Sagan's laidback lecture style, so successful on talk shows, was not always effective in the Cosmos host role, and efforts to bring out his special enthusiasm and intensity - by using long close-ups of his face, for example - sometimes seemed forced. Fortunately, Cosmos relied

Rae Goodell teaches science writing at MIT and is the author of The Visible Scientists.

most science stories: astronomer Wallace Tucker's explanation of the star of Bethlehem (the first plausible one I've read), and anthropologist Karen Janszen's thoughtful report on the growing practice of placenta eating in America.

Sex would appear to be the main selling point of another new magazine, Science and Living Tomorrow, which began last June with Omni-like covers but switched, in December, to a very warm and human item: a female torso, scantily and provocatively adorned by a gold bikini. This small magazine is published and edited by Gerald Rothberg, who also puts out a successful

#### by RAE GOODELL

heavily on the vivid dramatic sequences, ingenious explanations, and flights of imagination that are characteristic of Sagan's books, and most of this material was riveting. Overall, the ratings were the highest for a weekly series in PBS's history.

Looking to the future, PBS seems likely to continue to outdistance the commercial networks in quantity, innovativeness, and depth of science programming, if not in ratings. In the pipeline are several new National Geographic specials and a series on bioethics called Hard Choices (starting this month), as well as reruns of the anthropology and archeology series Odyssey, the children's show 3-2-1 Contact, and the West Coast series Synthesis, which, unlike most science programs, provides scientific background for current political controversies.

Still relatively rare, however, are efforts at both PBS and the commercial networks to integrate science into regular news and entertainment programming — something between the bits of science in *Quincy* and *Those Amazing Animals*, and the splendid isolation of science in *Nova* and *National Geographic* specials. (*The MacNeil/Lehrer Report* is a notable exception.) As long as science tends to be segregated in separate programs, television will be preaching largely to the converted, without improving significantly most people's understanding of science.

popular-music magazine, Circus. Rothberg evidently has only a shoestring and his bootstraps with which to support his science effort. Despite its cover — an apparent act of desperation to boost its less-than-75,000 circulation — Science and Living Tomorrow had some sensible and interesting articles interspersed with banal sex stories. Among them were a critical discussion of the national policy on renal dialysis and a feature on the way children can express their experience of pain.

The latest, but by no means the last, of the new magazines is Discover, published monthly by Time Inc. Discover. whose stated circulation is 500,000, styles itself "The Newsmagazine of Science." Its news items, however, brought no surprises and reflected no imagination whatever about science or news. As it happens, by far the best source of science news is a small, nonprofit weekly magazine called Science News. It offers prompt, intelligent, witty reporting to readers who are not put off by a few such basic scientific terms as ion or hormone. Given its potential. I think that Science News is rather too modestly promoted. Its current circulation of 175,000 could, I suspect, be doubled or trebled if the right people knew about it. Evidently, writers for the other science magazines read Science News: uncredited echoes of its stories often appear elsewhere.

To get back to *Discover:* its feature articles, mostly written by a staff assembled from outside the ranks of *Time*, have been as safe and predictable as its news items; stories about the Nobel prizes and monarch butterflies, and a photoessay on deep-sea creatures typified its December issue. The magazine seemed intent on doing nothing disreputable — and not to notice that it was achieving the ordinary. The format seemed well suited to the content: dowdy and functional.

Discover's commitment to scientific respectability seems to go beyond the call of duty: it cultivates an aggressively upbeat attitude toward science, technology, and progress. Perhaps most revealing were its first three cover pictures. In October and November they were computer graphics — representations, respectively, of a DNA segment and a solar flare. In December, there followed a car-



toon of a morose couple surrounded by threatening, monster-like computer terminals. The article it illustrated was a putdown of "computerphobes," who were compared, predictably but with some historical inaccuracy, to the Luddites. The message of the magazine seemed to be, "Science is machinery. Machinery makes art and progress. Progress is good for you. Like it."

To decorate its presentation of science as wholesome and bountiful, *Discover* has enlisted the elegant prose of Lewis Thomas, who contributes a monthly column. If Dr. Pangloss could have begotten a child by Pollyanna, Dr. Thomas's essays might well have been the progeny. The language is exquisite, but the message is intractably optimistic and heartily pro-science.

Actually, all of the new magazines are pro-science, and they will be joined this spring or summer by a technology magazine, as yet untitled, whose editor has characterized it as "pro-technology." (The publisher is Bernard Goldhirsh of Inc., a magazine for small businessmen.) It would, of course, be silly for any of the magazines to identify itself as "anti-science" or "anti-technology," just as it would be for The New Republic to call itself "anti-politics." But surely there are possible attitudes that are neither "pro" nor "anti." What is badly needed, and so far not forthcoming from any of the magazines, is some recognition that the scientific estate, as Don Price has called it, just might be as complicated as the others, and as sorely in need of a fourth estate to examine it.

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## **BOOKS**

#### Information, please

The Geopolitics of Information

by Anthony Smith

Oxford University Press. 192 pp. \$13.95

by MORT ROSENBLUM

One bedrock certainty of Hollywood westerns is that, during the dramatic moments when ol' Slade lays his gun on the table and turns his back on ol' Cactus Ribs, no one is going to get shot until all eyeballs are once again in contact. If Western culture has permeated the Third World, as is often charged, this part of the code didn't soak in.

A series of monologues, known loosely as a "debate," has been going on for nearly a decade about whether there should be a New World Information Order. Many Third World leaders argue that their nations are poorly covered and that their journalists should have a greater role in dispensing information to the world. Most newspeople from societies with a free press agree. And, at first, a lot of us said so in articles that, according to the doctrine of fairness, were laced with examples of our own failings. But so many of us "Western newsmen" who write on the subject have been shot in the back with our own mea culpas that balanced writing on the subject is now all but impos-

Not long ago, for example, I read a UNESCO working document that quoted an unidentified "Western newsman" who heaped abuse on his colleagues. The material looked somewhat familiar, and I checked further. It was me, alas, quoted five different times, out of context and in a distorted fashion, by someone making points that were the opposite of those I had made originally.

Mort Rosenblum is the editor of the International Herald Tribune and the author of Coups and Earthquakes. From 1967 to 1978 he reported from Third World countries for The Associated Press. Others report similar experiences. Examples of the extreme are presented as the norm. The acts of a sloppy few are attributed to all, including those exceedingly professional correspondents whose good work never seems to come up in the debate.

Most working newsmen never got involved at all. Either they were too busy working, or they were soured by the generalities and misinformation. The general public, meanwhile, is too paralyzed with boredom to keep up with the debate, much less to join in.

None of this, however, has deterred a new class of professional observers who seize on the deceptive evidence to support any case they care to make. Anthony Smith's book seeks to sort out the various cases but in fact ends up as a trove of such deceptive evidence. From a background of television documentaries, Smith took a fellowship at Ox-

ford to look at broadcasting policy and then became a free-lance writer on media affairs. His study is not unlike that of others who submit the issue to measuring sticks, stopwatches, and careful counts of "negative" and "positive" news items.

There is value in Smith's book. He outlines the basic issues well, presenting the various arguments in detail. He has taken the trouble to discuss radio frequencies, television programs, films, and informatics. But on the fundamental question of news coverage his supporting evidence propagates damaging myths that have become reality by simple repetition. His subtitle, "How Western Culture Dominates the World," is a rather clear indication of his point of view.

In his book, a tide of inaccurate and misleading figures and tables confuses the uninitiated. There are errors in his-

A broadcaster in Saudi Arabia



#### STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

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#### OF CIRCULATION

Average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months:

mondia.	
Total number of copies printed	38,744
Paid circulation:	
<ol> <li>Sales through dealers and carriers,</li> </ol>	
street vendors and counter sales	2,030
2. Mail subscriptions	32,531
3. Total paid circulation	34,561
Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other	
means: samples, complimentary,	
and other free copies	743
Total distribution	35,304
Copies not distributed:	
Office use, left over, unaccounted for,	
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2. Returns from news agents	1,425
Total	38 744

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street vendors and counter sales 2,045
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2. Returns from news agents 1,380

Total 37,466

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#### BOOKS

torical data, as well as minor but irritating mistakes, such as the assertion that Canada, well-served by The Canadian Press and United Press Canada, has no news agency. But the major fault lies in his overall picture of the processes of newsgathering.

"When a European or American reporter goes to Asia or Africa and discovers 'shortages,' 'instability,' 'corruption,' 'crisis,' he is often performing the same mental operation as Stanley,'' he writes, referring to the great colonizer and after-a-fashion journalist of a century ago, Henry Morton Stanley. His implication is that the "Western Press," that catchphrase which takes in reporters from Japan and Australia and Iceland, covers the Third World with a colonial mentality.

To support this argument, he quotes from a speech by Stanley urging British colonization of the Congo basin. But Smith gets it wrong. When Stanley made his appeal to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, he was no longer a newsman, as the book asserts, but a self-avowed proselytizer for what is now known as development. This is not to defend Stanley; it is to point out how absurd the debate can get in seeking historical and statistical bases for analyzing wholly changed circumstances. Like Stanley's, my first foreign assignment was the Congo. Neither I nor my colleagues sought to sell British woolens to the natives.

Elsewhere he writes: "Famine, disorder, corruption, disruption are the common topics [of Western news agencies]; if the publication of the resulting material is then damaging to the interests of the developing nations in their search for capital, for markets, for a just share of world resources, it is arguable that the blame must be directed at those institutions which condition the mass mind of the West."

This would make more of a point if journalists did not also write about shortages, instability, corruption, and crisis in their own capitals, and with rather more energy. Those are elements of change and, therefore, disreputable as this word might be, news. Why shouldn't shortages, instability, corruption, and crisis be covered in the Third

World, as well? They have development problems, Smith — and others — argue. But can industrialized nations be asked to help the development process, with material aid and moral sympathy, if they don't have an accurate picture of what is going on? Don't those whose capital these countries are seeking have a right to know how it might be spent? If reporters reveal how Richard Nixon spied on his opponents and lied about it, shouldn't they reveal how Jean-Bedel Bokassa personally oversaw the massacre of children?

Some of these comments may be unfair to Smith's intentions because it is not always clear whether he is making his own case or simply laying out arguments to which he does not necessarily subscribe. But if a careful reading does not separate one from the other, these comments must be made.

ew professional newspeople accept the measuring stick school of media analysis, but if it is to be used as a guide, then there is now overwhelming evidence that major news organizations do not concentrate on negative news from the Third World. Eminent column-inch counters have discovered that, in fact, news stories from developing countries are more often generally "positive" - or at least unclassifiable. These stories are, of course, sometimes shallow and ill-informed, but that cannot be measured in any significant way by the various onlookers. And a good number of these stories are masterfully done, with evenhanded assessment of fundamental issues.

In one of his hypothetical examples Smith alleges, with some disdain, that Western reporters are likely to flock to a developing country only in the event of, say, a flood. Yet if a country suffers from a flood serious enough to attract a flock of correspondents, it is certain to require the aid their reports would bring. No government can be embarrassed about a flood. And if it is embarrassed that local corruption is diverting relief supplies, should reporters be prevented from informing the donors?

This begins to sound, again, like The Debate. A more constructive approach is to concentrate on what is desirable,

and what is attainable, according to the greatest number of viewpoints. As Smith points out, the common goal is an increased number of purveyors of news so that developing nations have a louder voice, with more access to the main channels of communications in the world. Third World moderates want that; Western newsmen want that. In recent years, dozens of national news agencies have been set up, often with help from the major Western agencies. But, again, there is a problem here: credibility.

Smith describes the beginnings of Zaire's agency, AZaP. He recalls the early years of its postcolonial predecessor, the Agence Congolaise de Presse, which, he says, was "inevitably . . . deprived of automatic credibility in the developed world." Automatic credibility? I stayed awake until dawn once in Kinshasa watching dispatches of the Agence Congolaise de Presse about the trial of the captured guerrilla, Pierre Mulele. Gripping accounts they were, detailing the secret military trial and promising a verdict by daybreak. In fact, however, Mulele already had been executed and dumped in the Congo River the night before.

That is perhaps the greatest weakness of the book - and of the line of argument that says established news organizations are suppressing competition from the Third World. Few Western correspondents and editors believe themselves to be perfect. They know, more than the professional observers, how the limits on their resources hamper coverage of developing countries. Most would turn handsprings to discover a reliable source of news from countries they can't properly report on themselves. But, precisely because they do not want to misinform, they insist on sources they can trust. And, with a great deal of reason, few of them trust any news agency until it establishes its credibility.

There has been, for years, substantial cooperation among the large international agencies, regional agencies, and national agencies. This might be in the form of informal contacts between reporters. Often it includes commercial exchanges in which a national agency,

by law or by preference, distributes material for The Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, or Agence France-Presse. Frequently, principal bureaus or head offices of the big agencies receive the services of regional and national agencies which they use in their own reporting. But, in each case, dispatches are read in the light of the credibility established by the national or regional agency.

If a national news agency is set up on the principle that its information must serve the purposes of the state, as is implicit in the increasingly popular doctrine of "developmental reporting," it is not hard to understand why a reporter seeking to be objective would be somewhat chary.

In the mid-1970s, a group of Third World nations joined in a news pool, channeled through the Tanjug agency in Yugoslavia, to seek a wider audience for their dispatches. The idea was not only to provide information for the rest of the world but also to share news that wasn't available from the international agencies. The experiment proved a failure largely because too many government agencies insisted on transmitting unreliable dispatches which they did not trust the pool organizers to edit.

here is another reason why the pool failed — one that Smith does not sufficiently treat. It is in the nature of humans — whether in the Third World, or the Second or the First — to lend attention only to things that interest them. Shortages, instability, corruption, crisis, for starters. People are also interested in exemplary development news, when it is news. But Bolivians don't care much about fishmeal plants in Libya. Malians don't want to hear about a Burmese cabinet minister's routine trip to the interior.

This is why, for example, government newscasts in many Third World countries are timed to avoid conflict with the BBC World Services news. It is also why, as Smith notes, Radio Moscow broadcasts an enormous number of hours in Africa but has far fewer listeners than the BBC. People have come to trust the Beeb, not because it is British but because they have found it is pre-

pared to cover major events that affect the world, whether or not the coverage discomfits local political figures. If officials feel the BBC represents foreign domination of information, there is only one way for them to eclipse it: produce more believable, more interesting news programs.

The question of interest accounts for much of the "cultural domination" that Smith decries in his book. At one point, he ties Canada to the plight of Third World nations suffering from U.S. supermedia. He laments that Canadian broadcasters were forced by circumstances to add American programs to their schedules to keep up their ratings. And, he says, it is a "tragic paradox" that a new link to Canada's north will carry U.S. programs to compete with Canadian ones.

With rare exception, television sets in Canada have channel selectors. It is hard to imagine Canadians as poor, deprived neocolonials, suffering under the yoke of *Charlie's Angels*. Canada is a representative democracy, and its policy is determined by national interest. Unless Canadians want the policy changed, the government won't change it. More authoritarian governments can apply Smith's solutions unhindered. That, however, does not necessarily mean a better society.

A more complete treatment of the issues, and a more accurate description of the processes, can be found in Rosemary Righter's book, Whose News?, which was published in 1978. Although The Geopolitics of Information was written recently enough to deal with the controversial MacBride Commission report, and subsequent discussions at UN-ESCO, these aspects have already been overtaken by events. Righter is one of the few working journalists who have not despaired of writing with balance, and she has the advantage of understanding how news is gathered from the standpoint of someone who is gathering

It is far clearer from Righter's book, for instance, why the basic issues go far beyond academic argument and political rhetoric. There is grave danger in a number of measures now under active consideration, within UNESCO and by



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governments involved in the debate. At Belgrade, in October, the Communist and Third World majority at UNESCO pushed Western governments into a "consensus" resolution that takes clear steps toward more government control of the media, including the concept of codes of conduct and definitions of "responsible" reporting. This is hardly surprising: legitimate complaints against news organizations' performance lend a tailor-made rationalization for imposing the means of managing news. Once governments were reluctant to expel reporters, or to jail them, for fear of acquiring an authoritarian image; now they can expel and jail at will in the name of a New World Information Order.

Some countries have taken steps to force foreign correspondents to rely on the national news agency for information. In some cases, interviews and trips to the interior must be cleared with local news agency authorities. In many more, visas are granted to correspondents only after a careful study of their past work — if they are granted at all.

The irony is as thick as the hypocrisy. Invariably, at international meetings, some official condemns Western reporters for writing about his country without visiting it, when legions of reporters had been trying for months, even years, to elicit visas to do exactly that.

The increasing tendency to control foreign news is already distorting our knowledge of events that are vital to us. For example: a war in the Middle East is dangerous by any measure; when it is misunderstood, the danger is magnified by dizzying proportions. And yet, from the first day, the Iraq-Iran war has been all but impossible to follow. The Iraqis allowed reporters to watch the fighting only when they felt they were winning. The Iranians had banned almost all newspeople long before the hostilities began, and they permitted access to the story on a carefully calculated basis. Information came out of neighboring capitals and Washington, but much of it was guesswork - and almost all of it was secondhand. Official policy and public opinion were based on incomplete and unreliable reports.

According to a widely held view, a New World Information Order should not only condone such a situation, but it should also institutionalize it.

This is really what we are talking about. A number of responsible journalists and policymakers in the Third World want a better system for all of us, with more of us listening closely to more of them. But a far greater number of authoritarian-minded officials see it differently. With their proposals for codes and guidelines and their UNESCOsponsored councils, they don't seek to add new, louder voices. They seek, instead, to screen out voices that already exist. These officials, who already muzzle their press at home, now want to control what citizens of free societies are able to learn from their own correspondents

Smith warns of this clearly, and makes it plain that he does not favor control of the press. His concluding remarks are an articulate statement of the problems faced, and, particularly in the chapter on broadcast communications and computer technology, he outlines legitimate concerns of a number of developing countries. He demonstrates how the existing order makes it difficult for smaller countries to be heard, whatever their message. And he ends the book with optimism: "Though it is difficult to root out the imbalances which stem from the past, there is a sense in which the 'information society' anticipated for the 1980s and 1990s could deliberately be treated as the opportunity for a new beginning."

But Smith's body of confusing evidence supports the case for news management, and his contribution is diminished by a failure to deal with the generalities that plague us all: "the Third World" to mean scores of countries as different as Brazil and Burundi; "the Western press" for *The New York Times* and political party weeklies in Europe; "information" as a catchall term for balanced dispatches, propaganda, computer data banks. And "news."

It is impossible to speak of "news" in any definite sense. What is really meant is "the contents of a newspaper, or a news agency report, or a newscast." These contents are determined by

each editor's perceptions of what he thinks will interest his audience. He may guess wrong, but, if he does, his audience will disappear. If he misinforms, he will be shunned as unreliable. The editor has a responsibility to create tastes for important information — including development and "positive" news — but he must be his own judge.

Smith's book seems to imply that there should be a higher authority, a separate judge to make sure the editor does his job properly. But who? The drafters of the U.S. Constitution made sure it was not the government, in the tradition of all democracies that recognize the value of free, informed citizens. So who else? UNESCO? Anthony Smith?

#### Head of the class

The Harvard Crimson Anthology: One Hundred Years at Harvard Edited by Greg Lawless. Houghton Mifflin Company. 378 pp. \$16.95

by MOLLY IVINS

There are a great many treats in this book: it's rather like a large chocolate chip cookie. Anthony Lewis, in his introduction, finds it "a piece of social history," and so it is. Mr. Lewis also finds himself up a stump, off which he rapidly gets, as to why anyone who has not loved and labored on *The Harvard Crimson*, as he did, would want to read this book. For a reviewer who did neither that is still a central question, and not easily answered, as it involves an odd prejudice.

The trouble is that almost no one likes Harvard. Setting aside alumni loyalty, it almost certainly is, and has been since it was founded, the best university in the country. But it must be the best without much grace, for it is so widely perceived as an affected, stuck-up place — "snotty," I think, is the word. This could be attributed to a feeling of inferiority or resentment or envy on the part of people who haven't gone there, but excellence doesn't usually create re-

Molly Ivins is on the metropolitan staff of The New York Times.

sentment unless it is accompanied by arrogance. The Yankees are a case in point. So, sometimes, is *The New York Times*.

In our business. The Harvard Crimson has a special reputation, not only because it is the best or one of the best college newspapers, but also because it has so consistently bred outstanding journalists in "real life." The list is endless, but you can take it as given that an impressive proportion of the people we have all heard of in the news business were once Crimson editors. They call themselves crim-eds. Esquire magazine ran an article a few years ago on their ubiquity and accomplishments. They are, by and large, a genial lot: every now and then you run across a snobby one and think, "Oh, all those old Crimson people are like that." That is the way prejudice works.

This collection offers no help on the origins of the prejudice but does prove once again that the *Crimson* is not just a good college paper — it can be graded without that curve — but excellent read-

ing. For those who love reading old issues of any paper, this collection provides some of the delights of the dusty back shelves in the library. As a college editor. I often wrote boring editorials bemoaning apathy on campus, and so I was consoled by a similar plaint in the Crimson - of 1884. College humor has a rank reputation, but some of the samples in the anthology are wonderful. Football seems to have called forth some of the finest efforts of the student journalists. There is a delightful report on the undefeated 1968 team, which featured a quarterback who decided to try out when he read in the paper that Harvard would have a Big Hole in that position.

f particular interest are two pieces from the 1960s: one, by Jody Adams, '69, is a moving description of the police bust of a student-occupied building in 1969; the students were protesting the war in Vietnam and it is fascinating to see again the emotions of that time without

## "A moving and powerful biography" of the reporter's reporter.

In his vivid and spirited style, A. J. Liebling celebrated boxers, GI's, good food. In his "Wayward Press" columns for The New Yorker, he set the brilliant, witty standards for modern press criticism. Assessing his achievements and exploring the personal tragedies of his life, "this first biography of Liebling will introduce the man to a new generation and surprise most of his old admirers.... A poignant and powerful por-

rait." —Ben Bagdikian, Washington Post Book World

## WAYWARD REPORTER

A.J. LIEBLING
by RAYMOND SOKOLOV





the rancor of that time. There is also a stunning piece by John G. Short, '70, who was with the radical Weathermen when they ran riot in Chicago in 1969. Among its other virtues, this piece is a fascinating snapshot of the minds of young people who are thinking themselves into becoming terrorists. (According to Harvard alumni office records, Mr. Short is now a lawyer in the Virgir Islands.)

The articles about Harvard's attitudes toward Radcliffe and its students provide another sort of rear-view mirror perspective of our evolution. There have been cracks and comments made as a matter of course that would get today's Crimson picketed by furious women and put its editors (often female themselves these days) in danger of lynching. In 1940, Miss Toni Sorel, contender for the title of Number One Oomph Girl of the Nation, may or may not have said to the Crimson, "Here I stood in the Harvard Yard, lousy with ivy and tradition, when the whole picture was ruined - a couple of strange creatures came waddling along. Radcliffe girls are horrible. They have hairy legs and fat fannies and shouldn't be allowed in the Yard." This led the women to form a Committee to Take Radcliffe Seriously, which was not destined to have great success. A 1960

editorial boldly proposes that "The time has come to talk of Radcliffe women being allowed to have men in their rooms more often than the allotted and tea-soaked twice a year. . . "The next thing we hear (1969), the university has proposed co-ed dormitories, and by 1971 the university's health service is offering a sex-counseling service.

Poor Greg Lawless, who edited this collection, must have had material for a book in the letters-to-the-editor alone. My favorite is the plaintive response of the luckless instructor who was labeled "dull" by the Crimson's famous Confidential Guide.

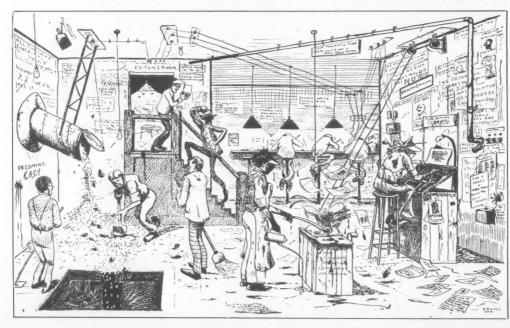
"If you had labeled my performance 'scintillating' or 'nervously exciting' or 'intrepid,' I could write to you without misgiving,' wrote Lyle Glazier, instructor in English, in 1946. "But you have blasted me with 'dull.' Already I see next fall's 'dull' and 'truculent' blotting the page.

"Dear friends, have you considered the consequence of your epithet? How can I explain it to my wife? 'But dear, The Crimson called you dull.' How can I explain it to my children? 'Daddy, The Crimson called you dull.' How can I explain it to my literary executors? 'The painful fact is that, in spite of his eminence, The Harvard Crimson called him dull.' And suppose I were not married. 'Oh, sir. No, sir. The Crimson called you dull.'

"My humiliation would be less if you had spared the scrap of respect you could so easily have spared. I have just reckoned that in the past year I have corrected papers for 225 students. Was there really not one who said, 'Well, not exactly dull . . . that is . . . '? Or didn't you leave a single one unpolled, so that in your largeness of heart you could have made clear the partiality of your judgment? Think how different the impression if you had given the statistics: Glazier, 225 students; polled, 224 dull. Then I could always have said, 'Ah, but if they had inquired of Heartbalm, the result would have been different.' ''

If the *Crimson*, collectively, has a fault it is that it takes itself too seriously. Michael J. Ryan, in an introductory history of the *Crimson*, writes, "But the record shows that honesty, competence, and courage have always been the dominant virtues of Cambridge's Breakfast Table Daily, that talent, even in the darkest days, was always in evidence." And so on. But then, this is a failing not limited to the *Crimson*.

The book was published in December and it is a pleasure.



The Crimson newsroom as seen by the Harvard Lampoon in 1904

## And now, the message the networks keep ignoring

Imagine a product the public is anxious to buy and plenty of suppliers are willing to produce. A large majority of America's shopkeepers want to carry the item. But the most influential distributors in the land say they know best, and the product isn't really to their taste. So they arbitrarily refuse to carry it, thereby frustrating the will of most of the rest of the country.

This farfetched scenario is exactly what's happening today in television land, to a "product" called issue advertising—commercials that discuss issues or ideas rather than blue jeans and dog food. Companies trying to get such commercials on CBS, NBC, and ABC have been about as welcome as ring around the collar.

But while the networks, from their ivory towers, have steadfastly refused to air commercials dealing with the issues of the day, the evidence is overwhelming that the American people want to see such messages, and that most TV stations are anxious to carry them.

A new survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, for example, shows that <u>85 percent of the American public</u> think corporations should be allowed to present their views on controversial matters in TV commercials. That's a 13-point increase from the already high proportion of Americans who felt this way two years ago.

As for the broadcasters, themselves, an overwhelming 89 percent of the TV stations surveyed by the Television Bureau of Advertising, an industry trade group, say they're willing to accept advocacy advertising. That's a quantum leap from five years ago, when only half the stations polled were willing to sell time for the airing of opinion.

The broadcasters and public alike recognize that a lot has changed in recent years. In 1978, in the historic <u>Bellotti</u> decision, the Su-

preme Court struck down a Massachusetts law forbidding corporations to spend money to comment publicly on a referendum. And earlier this year, the high court ruled it unconstitutional for state regulators to deny utilities the right to include public policy messages with customer bills. So for the print media, at least, the law is on the side of advocacy advertising.

But the three major television networks continue to deny advertisers the opportunity to express their views over the airwaves. Their rationale? The so-called Fairness Doctrine, the mandate of the Congress "to afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance." According to the networks' interpretation of this doctrine, only by exercising total control over the flow of ideas and points of view themselves can they protect the public from an unbalanced mix of opinions and ideas.

As a matter of fact, we have often questioned the "balanced coverage" provided by these self-styled guardians of the public good. TV newsmen, after all, pursue ratings even as they pursue truth, and the two objectives do not necessarily coincide. The result is often unbalanced reporting and something less than the whole truth—and, to date, industry has been unable to respond on the very medium that creates the distortion.

The public and the TV stations alike seem to have recognized this shortcoming and are on record as welcoming the voices of those who wish to be heard.

It's time for the networks to catch up with the rest of the country and open the airwaves to fresh ideas and a fresh dialogue. The Fairness Doctrine was never intended as a muzzle. To use it as such is to twist it 180 degrees and transform it into a doctrine of eminent unfairness.



## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### The Gdansk factor

TO THE REVIEW:

Your editorial comment and the cover story (CJR, November/December) on the struggle in Poland was an interesting study of news perspectives in the United States toward a dramatic overseas event.

Of course, all professionals are fascinated by an underground press and one which achieved influence in a totalitarian society. From the vantage point of many in this country who could identify with the Gdansk strikers, however, the U.S. print and broadcast media continued to go for the crowds, the demonstrations, and the confrontations, and not the substance.

Rather than quoting a NBC newsman on "the single most satisfying and enjoyable experience of my career," one wonders why CJR did not explore the almost absurd manner in which politicians of all ideological hues in this country (including conservative Ronald Reagan, who sought out the father of the Gdansk strike leader to appear with during his Labor Day campaign kick-off rally), rushed to heap praise on the workers who were shutting down factories, plants, and transportation in another country.

Seemingly only the editorial cartoonists saw the delightful irony of the contradictions of a Reagan or a Strom Thurmond or a William Simon applauding the heroism of the workingman standing up for his rights as long as it was in Gdansk, Krakow, or Warsaw. For these politicians who read from the hymn book that has "big labor" out to destroy the good old free enterprise system, there are - of course - two criteria for "workers' rights."

I would be more impressed with CJR were it to delve into the struggle in this country when all of the forces of the state were directed against shipyard workers who sought to have their own union - and for their trouble had police attack dogs, armored trucks, a massive show of state riot troopers, and the authority of the statehouse turned against them. The story - that of Newport News Shipbuilding Co. strikers who, in 1978-80, were brutalized by the police, had their union headquarters broken into and

Law and order in Newport News

their telephones tapped - has largely been ignored by the American news media.

The accompanying 1979 photo from The (Norfolk) Virginian-Pilot, which was distributed by The Associated Press, was not picked up by any other daily newspaper in North America, yet it demonstrated more violence and armed force against a workingman than any incident in Poland during its days of crisis. Since the Soviets have now made Afghanistan news, we can no longer use that old "Afghanistan" saw about nonnews. Perhaps instead we should call it the Gdansk factor.

> RUSSELL W. GIBBONS Director of public relations United Steelworkers of America Pittsburgh, Pa.

#### Withdrawal pains

TO THE REVIEW:

A dart to CJR for reporting in "Name That Source - or Else" (CJR, November/December) that the Greenberg v. CBS, Inc. libel suit "has yet to be decided," when in fact it was withdrawn April 24, 1980. The settlement involved withdrawal by Dr. Greenberg of his allegations of negligence in the preparation and execution of the 60 Minutes report, while CBS expressed its regrets for "any embarrassment that Dr. Greenberg feels he sustained as a result of the broadcast." No money was involved in the settlement.

> ROBERT CHANDLER Vice president and director. public affairs broadcasts **CBS News** New York, N.Y.

#### Faking it on the Hot Line

TO THE REVIEW:

Rich Stim's "Was Randy Mantooth Ever in the Service?" (CJR, November/December) is a charming recollection of newspaper days by a young man. The piece is humorous in tone, and, I suppose, entertaining.

But I wonder if running it without comment is not in some way a disservice to your readers, and I wonder about the Review's intent. Certainly without commenting on the piece you leave the reader, and especially beginning journalists, to believe that you





condone this kind of journalism — not Stim's report, but his charming manner of making it seem all right for him to have done what he did.

I grant his column may have been relatively slight, though consumer columns are serious. Even if he were to consider it nothing more than a gossip column, entertaining, a diversion, slight though popular — still, even gossip columns work within certain boundaries of fact.

As I understand and was taught, journalism has certain rules. One is that you don't make up the facts, or the piece. Fabrication is a cardinal sin. It's also a sin to make a mistake. But mistakes can be forgiven. Deliberately falsifying the facts is ground for dismissal.

PETER MENKIN Editor-Manager Feature Associates San Rafael, Calif.

#### It's a fact!

TO THE REVIEW:

Pamela Ridder's "There Are TK Fact-Checkers in the U.S." (CJR, November/December) was very interesting — and not without its ironies.

Wrapping up the article, Ridder quoted "a journalist named Bliss Carman," from an article in The Atlantic Monthly. Although Carman was a journalist at times of his life, and although he lived a large part of it in the U.S., he is chiefly remembered, when he is remembered at all, as one of Canada's foremost nineteenth-century poets. The description of "journalist" given in your story - not too unlike describing Hemingway as a former Toronto Star reporter because at one time he was one - seems a perfect example of the very quote your author attributed to Carman, namely, "a fact merely marks the point where we have agreed to let the investigation cease."

> ELAINE B. KAHN New York, N.Y.

#### The pap indictment

TO THE REVIEW:

I am a charter subscriber to the Review, which means I have been reading it for

Eurodollars, productivity, EFTS, commodities markets, modern portfolio theory, incomes policies, inflation accounting, LDC loans, reindustrialization, antitrust, computer crime, supply side economics, proxy fights, M-1A and M-1B, econometric models, multinational corporations, synthetic fuels, welfare reform

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almost twenty years. I have to tell you that in that time it has degenerated from incisive media critic to yawning purveyor of boring pap.

I recently reread some of the issues of those glorious early years under the editorsnip of James Boylan. Consistently, I find penetrating criticism and analysis of American newspapers. Why was Creed Black forced out as executive editor of the Wilmington News and Journal? Why was there a mutiny that decimated the staff of the Greensburg, Pennsylvania, Tribune-Review? Why does a terrible paper like the San Francisco Chronicle have such a huge circulation? What happened when efficiency experts tried to run The Cincinnati Enquirer's newsroom? What southern newspapers were leaders in the change to moderation in reporting racial progress? Why has The Atlanta Constitution gone from greatness to mediocrity?

s the Review going to go back to those days when it served as an incisive media critic and told us where our newspapers were going wrong? Hardly. Look at the November/December issue. A piece on the opposition press in Poland. (Wouldn't most of us really be more interested in a piece on the newspapers of Connecticut, or Illinois, or Oregon?) An exciting (?) yarn about the media's coverage of molecular biology. (How about something on coverage of local politics, crime, consumer matters?) Here we have the new Bolivian regime terrorizing the press. (We don't work in Bolivia, friends. We work in New Jersey and Georgia and Texas.) Here we have the thrilling (?) inside story behind magazine fact-checkers. (How about tracking down the errors to be found in the ten largest U.S. dailies?) Finally, a ray of hope - three pages about the antitrust situation in Chattanooga. Chattanooga? Gee, maybe the Review thinks that's in Japan - how else would it sneak through?

Some of us want thick, juicy steaks, not oatmeal. Can you assign someone to write about the decline of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch? How about something on The Denver Post, which has just been bought by the Los Angeles Times? What's the "new" Chicago Tribune like? What makes The St. Petersburg Times probably America's best daily? Why not analyze a week's, or a month's, coverage in one of this country's innumerable fifth-rate dailies to show what makes a really bad newspaper? Why not show how some of America's best papers are not dailies at all, but weeklies? Why not analyze the performance of college news-

papers? Black newspapers? Labor newspapers? Why not analyze college journalism textbooks? Newspaper and wire-service stylebooks? Other journalism magazines — Quill, Bulletin, Journalism Quarterly, Publisher's Auxiliary?

Well - why not?

ROBERT A. JURAN

Director

Newspaper Editorial Workshop Services Lutz, Fla.

#### Scribes clash

TO THE REVIEW:

Scott Kaufer's article on the strained relationships between athletes and sportswriters ("Scribes, Players Clash in Locker-Room War," CJR, September/October) ascribes to me a defamatory view of the New York sportswriters covering the 1978 Yankees that is entirely at variance with the facts and with my opinions stated to him in a telephone interview. I did tell Mr. Kaufer that the writers on the Yankee beat that summer were eagerly involved in reporting the unpleasant clubhouse skirmishings between Reggie Jackson, George Steinbrenner, Billy Martin, Thurman Munson, et al, and I said further that this attention to personalities and angles sometimes seemed to obscure the fact that the Yankees were winning another championship on the field. I did not say or suggest to him that any of these writers would "fish around until they got one of the Yankees to say something derogatory about another, and then take the quote to its subject for a reaction." That is an accusation of journalistic arson, and no New York sportswriter known to me would attempt or consider such a deed. At the very least, they are owed an apology and a retraction by you and your author.

In talking to Mr. Kaufer, I emphasized the fact that I am only a part-time observer of the baseball scene, and I urged him to talk to the daily writers on the Yankee beat in order to get a clearer view of the notorious clubhouse scene at the stadium that summer. If he had done so, his article would have avoided the imputations of unprofessionalism ascribed to me, which have damaged my relationships with journalistic colleagues whose work I admire and whose friendship I value.

ROGER ANGELL The New Yorker New York, N.Y.

Scott Kaufer replies: As Mr. Angell knows, the phrasing to which he objects ('fish around . . .'', etc.) was mine, not his, which I assumed readers could tell from the absence of quotation marks around it. I was trying to describe the 1978 Yankee club-

house so that Mr. Angell's quoted observations elsewhere in the paragraph would be understandable. If anything, my description was mild; what Mr. Angell calls "the notorious clubhouse scene" was largely created and shamelessly milked, in my view. by many of the daily reporters. Moreover, Mr. Angell absolutely did say during our conversation that reporters would take one Yankee's quotes to others for reaction. The most casual sports fan knows that in the summer of 1978 those quotes were frequently derogatory. And the most casual clubhouse observer knows that derogatory quotes come from reporters fishing around - that is, asking a player if he is upset about such-andsuch, then scribbling furiously if he says that, come to think of it, he is. That's what I saw repeatedly in the 1978 Yankee clubhouse. Despite Mr. Angell's various friendships, I'm still surprised that he would see it differently.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

Scott Kaufer's fine essay about the growing combativeness between professional athletes and sports reporters notes important contemporary sources of friction which were not as significant in prior decades. My three-year study of this conflict - mainly with baseball players and reporters - shows several further considerations to be important in this widening communication problem. If certain "probing" questions are answered without the most careful attention to possible consequences, subsequent publication may bring the wrath of one's peers and superiors down on the offending member. Another point is that players are often influenced by their media images, and in certain instances may become depressed and perform less ably on the field. Finally, since it is mainly the "superstars" who refuse to talk with the press, other players may come to regard this as one criterion of stardom, and thus follow

> DAVID L. ALTHEIDE Associate professor Department of Sociology Arizona State University Tempe, Ariz.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

Andrew Crane's criticism (sidebar to "Scribes, Players Clash in Locker-Room War") of the fact that the newspaper coverage of a labor-management dispute in a sports industry is assigned to sportswriters rather than to writers familiar with labor relations problems is certainly valid. But then he proceeded, himself, to fall into the same trap that befalls some sportswriters: writing

about an unfamiliar subject and neglecting to do the necessary homework.

Several of the points Mr. Crane made in his sidebar article were, as they say, "out in left field." Starting from the erroneous premise that talk of a baseball strike was essentially a ploy that all sportswriters fell for, Mr. Crane then ventured into other easily verifiable errors, such as:

- 1. Both parties tried to exploit the press's ignorance for their own ends.
- 2. The union really wanted to preserve the status quo as long as possible.
- **3.** There could not be an impasse (followed by unilateral changes of conditions) so long as the other side indicated its willingness to go on negotiating.

#### The truth is:

- 1. The Players Association, with a limited staff, took great pains to keep the press informed at all times.
- 2. The forty-three page Memorandum of Agreement, which was reached at the end of many months of bargaining ending with a twelve-hour session the night and morning of May 22 and 23, is a far cry from the status quo.
- 3. If no agreement had been reached and baseball had been played as usual, at the end of the season, after the World Series had been played, it would have been possible for the owners to claim that an impasse had been reached. This could have resulted in their changing the conditions of the free agent draft in November 1980 or 1981. If a charge were then filed with the NLRB, the owners might or might not be reversed, but the careers and earnings of players for the two years or more it would take for the matter to be adjudicated would have been jeopardized irreversibly.

Serious as the foregoing errors are, the most egregious mistake relates to Mr. Crane's assumption that an actual strike was never intended, and that sportswriters fell for the "rhetoric." Mr. Crane supported his views with a quotation or a misquotation from Peter Seitz, the eminent arbitrator who had rendered the initial decision regarding free agency, following which his formal connection in baseball had been severed. If Mr. Crane wanted the opinion of a neutral source about the reality of the strike threat. why did he overlook Ken Moffett, the chief mediator assigned by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service? Mr. Moffett attended all the bargaining sessions in the final seven weeks and has said in a number of interviews and speeches that he had no doubt that a strike was certain until the early morning hours of the players' strike deadline Do policemen, teachers and other public employees have the right to strike?

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when a change in the owners' prior fixed position finally was made.

MARVIN J. MILLER Executive director Major League Baseball Players Association New York, N.Y.

Andrew Crane replies: To take Mr. Miller's points in order:

- 1. The question wasn't whether the Players Association was available and helpful to the press (Mr. Miller was extremely generous with his time, to me and others); the point I made was that Mr. Miller was successful in utilizing the sporting press to raise the specter of a strike, because sportswriters lacked the knowledge to question critically the alleged purposes of such a strike.
- 2. My sidebar made it clear that the union's desire to maintain the status auo related to the principal issue of free agency, not other matters addressed in the Memorandum of Agreement (such as minimum salaries, per diem expenses, etc.). The free agency issue was what the threatened strike was all about: the other issues were settled in just a few hours, once a compromise was reached on free agency.
- 3. I did not write that there could not be an impasse, but merely that most sportswriters covering the story didn't understand how difficult it would be for management to support such a declaration before the NLRB. Mr. Miller doesn't challenge this assertion, but raises (as he did last spring) the problem that is caused by delays in NLRB proceedings. The answer (as I wrote) is that management removed this problem by offering to guarantee no declaration of impasse in 1980. Nothing Mr. Miller says in his letter explains why a strike was necessary following this concession.

Finally, I would simply note that my interview with Peter Seitz is on tape, which I would be happy to play for Mr. Miller, and that I consider Mr. Seitz a more neutral source than Ken Moffett, whose entrance into the negotiations, at management's request, was referred to as "little more than a stalling tactic" by Mr. Miller.

#### In-house effects

TO THE REVIEW:

Regarding "The In-House Effect" by Roy Blount, Jr. (CJR, September/October): Doane is not the only person who has "jacked around" with the idea of packaging a magazine for military wives. Two flesh-and-blood individuals, Ed and Loretta Downey, created Ladycom in 1969, long before Blount's Hepworth led Doane down the primrose path

of specialized magazines.

As the sagacious Hepworth said, readership does not stand still, at least not in Ladycom's case. Published in domestic and overseas editions eight times a year, Ladycom will reach a new circulation level of 450,000 in January 1981.

Let Doane and Hepworth rest assured: There is always a market for a good idea.

SHEILA GIBBONS

Ladycom, The Military Lifestyle Magazine Washington, D.C.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

I found the cartoon accompanying "The In-House Effect" offensive to adults unlucky enough never to have learned how to read. The portraval of an illiterate as a dumb oaf with a copter-beany on his head helps to perpetuate an unfair and false stereotype.

Illiteracy is a rather widespread problem in the U.S.A. There are perhaps as many as sixty million adult illiterates in this country, and by no means are they stupid or dullwitted, as portraved in your cartoon.

A magazine for illiterates does, in fact, exist. It is called The Big Apple Journal and is published monthly in New York City by Literacy Volunteers. It is written by and for adult students.

> LARRY JONES Editor The Big Apple Journal New York, N.Y.

#### Our shameful past

TO THE REVIEW:

In the "Junk Mail" segment of Publisher's Notes (CJR, September/October), E. W. B. speaks of "our past experience." Has he had any future experiences? Or is "past" experience like "past" history, as on page 43 of the same issue?

It all sounds like true facts to me.

RICHARD CHERRY Los Angeles, Cal.

#### Ads that subtract

TO THE REVIEW:

Concerning the Leonard-Milianich letter about the Amway "advertisement" and your reply to that letter (CJR, September/October), it seems to me that you and the letter writers both missed an important point. The money that pays for editorials like those Amway and Mobil are currently running is a tax-deductible operating expense. While I don't object to their propagandizing CJR readers under the guise of "stimulating public dialogue," I do

object to their being able to tell me, at taxpayer expense, what and how I should be thinking about economic and political affairs. The fact that they are "conspicuously signed" or are "clearly labeled argumentation" seems irrelevant.

I doubt that Amway's aim of stimulating public dialogue has been met. In fact, as the "mature, thinking adult" that your comment condescendingly says I "presumably" am, I suspect Amway's aim is not to stimulate discussion, but to promote the far-right politics of its senior management.

> JERRY WIGGINS Garland, Tex.

TO THE REVIEW:

Your editorial disclaimer in the May/June issue notwithstanding, I still find it of dubious propriety that the Review would accept what I assume was a paid ad from the Argentine government singing the "rightness" of that regime in light of the personal and professional repressions reported in that country in Jacobo Timerman's "The Bodies Counted Are Our Own," which appears in the same issue.

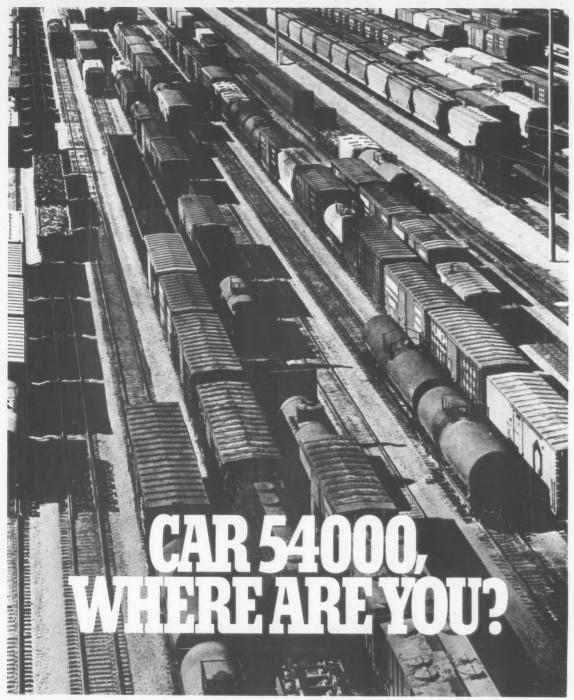
In my opinion, accepting that ad "in keeping with a policy of not suppressing contrary views" smacks of a double standard. If you were truly concerned about presenting "the other side," you could have refused to accept the ad, and printed a facsimile or reduction of it in a box along with your editorial. Or you might have invited a member of the Argentine embassy staff to submit an article presenting the official explanation for the apparent lack of freedoms in that country and run the piece adjacent to (or following) Timerman's story for reader comparison.

I realize that we all must get into the occasionally dirty business of making money. We all seem to have our blind spots as well. But my point is, if you are going to publish "under the auspices of the faculty, alumni, and friends of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University," and benefit from affiliation with that highly regarded institution, you would seem to have an obligation to try to establish and adhere to high standards of journalistic integrity.

> ROGER E. DARDEN East Lansing, Mich.

#### Deadline

The editors welcome and encourage letters from readers. To be considered for publication in the March/April issue, letters to the Review should be received by January 23. Letters are subject to editing for clarity and



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### REPORTS

The Great American Consciousness Machine: Engineering the Thought-Environment, by Rose K. Goldsen, Journal of Social Reconstruction, April-June 1980

Prime, sept, nones, vespers - the devotional hours by which medieval man marked out his day - find their contemporary counterparts in morning time, daytime, prime time, and the late show. But altering the way we experience time, argues the author of this provocative piece, is only one of the symptoms of the revolutionary effect of television on the formation of human consciousness. Consider, too, says Goldsen, a professor of sociology at Cornell, the homage society pays to the new fall season, its surge to the bathroom during commercial breaks, its ready assimilation of television's sights and sounds into every aspect of its precious culture. More alarming still, she says, is the fact that television images enter our minds and, she emphasizes, those of our children - holistically, all in a gulp. Designed to elicit response from the slow alpha waves produced by the right side of the brain (which is especially receptive to television's familiar, repetitive messages), television's images for the most part bypass the brain's other side - and with it, logic, thought, and critical judgment. The process amounts to a kind of emotional conditioning, she explains; the result is changed behavior and views.

Goldsen's purpose, however, is not to rehearse the damning evidence in a depressing indictment of the evils of the tube. It's solutions she's after, and she is convinced that she has put her finger on the basic flaw in the reasoning that keeps both the FCC and the professional reformers from effectively achieving change. As Goldsen sees, it, the difficulty comes from inappropriately applying to television commercials the principles and imperatives of the First Amendment. Contrary to the collective wisdom of the broadcasting industry, the communications lawyers, and the FCC, which holds that any positive agency action on commercials would seriously jeopardize our system of free expression, Goldsen argues that in not accepting jurisdiction over the commercials that now fill some 22 percent of television time, the FCC is actually abdicating its responsibility. (Even the Supreme Court, she points out, in its 1976 decision granting First Amendment protection to certain print ad-

vertising, prudently excluded the electronic broadcast medium with its "special problems.") Can it be seriously believed, Goldsen argues, that the market-research techniques for testing programs and commercials - those sensors that measure electro-galvanic skin response, those electrodes that record brain-wave patterns, those eve-tracking devices that follow where viewers fix their gaze - produce material that is really "in the public interest"? Is our system of expression, so thoroughly dominated by the television enterprise, truly "free expression" anyway? And - her most pivotal point - can the traditional metaphor of "the free market of ideas" honestly ap-

Goldsen thinks not. Citing the many fundamental differences between traditional advertising and television commercials, she challenges the notion that such engineering of viewers' consciousness can even qualify as selling. Prices and terms are rarely specified, she notes; product descriptions and ingredients are vague and ambiguous; the names of the real corporate owners are seldom heard. To be sure, the FTC steps in when commercials are demonstrably false. But no action is taken against the innumerable rigged demonstrations whose deceptions are more subtle, insidious, and often nonverbal (for example, playlets in which taking Geritol is a sign of marital affection, and Closeup rescues a foundering romance). It is the FCC's obligation - and its statutory right - to protect the public, Goldsen insists: if broadcasters fail to accept their responsibility as trustees of the airwaves, the agency might begin by requiring weekly half-hour, prime-time programs that would fully, and unglamorously, disclose the behind-the-scene activities that go into the production of the networks' lucrative commercials. Drastic medicine for TV's medicine shows indeed - but, Goldsen persuasively argues, strongly indicated if our system of free expression is to be healthy and

The Speaker and the Listener: A Public Perspective on Freedom of Expression, by John Immerwahr, Jean Johnson, and John Doble, The Public Agenda Foundation, 1980

As everybody knows, the First Amendment these days is under considerable threat not only from the government and an unfriendly Court, but even more fundamentally (and certainly more ironically) from the very public it was designed to serve. Indeed, there is no shortage of polls, studies, and research papers to give substance to warnings that public support for the amendment's repeal is far from unthinkable. Clearly, a better understanding of the public's position in debates involving First Amendment issues would help, and this unshrill report, part of a two-year project on freedom of expression in the communications media, is a laudable step in that direction.

First, in an attempt to identify the points at issue, the Public Agenda Foundation, under a grant from the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation, conducted a series of interviews with what it describes as "First Amendment players" - publishers, broadcasters, journalists, government officials, and "public interest leaders" whose professions directly relate them to freedom-of-expression questions. Then, in order to learn more about the attitudes of the general public, the researchers talked to more than a thousand individual Americans as well as to groups in five major cities. This approach produced some surprising insights, particularly about the different ways that press professionals and the public define the concept of freedom of expression.

Media leaders, for example, are unshakable in their commitment to the right of free expression without government interference, on the theory that a diverse spectrum of viewpoints competing in the marketplace of ideas is beneficial to a democratic society. The public, on the other hand, far from being the intolerant beast that the educated media elite often imagine, gives its highest commitment to the principle of fair play; its chief concern is with its right to hear those viewpoints so that it can intelligently make up its mind — to shop, as it were, in a fully stocked market. The public not only believes that it should have full access to alternative views including the views of communists, Nazis, homosexuals, and so on, but also and most significantly - is willing to back its notion of fairness with the full force of law. Government intervention, in other words, may be anathema to the media, but in the eyes of the public it is just a means of achieving the goal of a diversity of views.

How do the public's attitudes translate in terms of specific policy issues? Among other things, the findings indicate that just as the public rejects government or media policies that would eliminate certain points of view, so too, by extension, it rejects censorship of program content, including sex and violence, on television (it does, however, support program advisories and sensible scheduling of such programs). Another revelation, more disquieting perhaps, is that the public, far from endorsing current efforts to deregulate broadcasting, would happily expand the fairness doctrine and equal-time rule to include major newspapers as well.

Interpreting the results, the researchers take pains to explain that the differences between media leaders and average citizens do not reflect a clash between right and wrong, but rather between right and right, with each position grounded in authentic democratic values. As the debate goes on, the authors hopefully suggest, this report may provide a solid basis for informed exchange, as well as for mutual respect.

**The Directory of Directories,** edited by James M. Ethridge, Information Enterprises, 1980

A directory of directories is a list of lists in this case, 5,126 of them, ranging from abortion clinics to zip codes, from apprenticeships to Wizard-of-Oz clubs, from advertising agencies to Wyoming lawmakers, from air pollution monitoring programs to writers' associations. What separates the genre from the rest of the reference crowd. explains editor Ethridge, is addresses, and in addition to that handy bit of information, each listing includes phone number, name of publisher, number of pages, frequency of publication, scope of material, and price. Cross-indexed for subject and title, the listings are arranged in fifteen major categories: e.g., business, law and government, public affairs and social concerns, sports. Journalists may not want to lug this oversized volume around with their portables, but a browse in its 722 pages is sure to turn up leads to sources that will ease their work.

**Middle East Review,** American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, Summer/Fall 1980

Founded thirteen years ago by a group of academicians specializing in the Middle East, this quarterly review has as its stated aim the encouragement of new ideas and approaches to the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This informative double issue offers a dozen articles on communications, both within the Middle East and about it.

Exploring the patterns of broadcasting in the Arab world, Drew McDaniel finds that while there is a receptive and comprehending audience in the area for programs such as those broadcast by the BBC and Radio Cairo, the fact that the programs are essentially government propaganda, whose sources are not always entirely clear, tends to leave audiences confused and uncertain what to think. Rather than leading to improved understanding, says McDaniel, international broadcasting in the region, with its differing interpretations of the same events, ironically leads to clashes on the airwaves that can quickly escalate to the ambassadorial level. Three articles trace the history of particular media in particular countries: broadcasting in Saudi Arabia, where a combination of technological developments and traumatic events may be stimulating more active information activity on the part of the government; filmmaking in Egypt, the Hollywood of the Arab world, which now competes with Western cinema for Arab audiences: and broadcasting in Libva, where the People's Revolutionary Broadcasting Corporation, the outgrowth of Qadhafi's seizure of the mass media in 1973, plays a strong role in promoting the country's political objectives (a sidebar of samples from "The Voice of Libya" makes fascinating reading).

Of more immediate interest to American readers, perhaps, is a group of essays examining coverage of Middle East affairs by the Western media. An in-depth discussion of the Arab-Israeli conflict in 300 college newspapers monitored during the 1979-1980 academic year turns up an interesting anomalv: American students and campus lecturers, notes Fredelle Z. Spiegel, present Arab views as being far more moderate than the writings of Arab students themselves would indicate. Douglas J. Feith's "Israel, the Post, and the Shaft" scathingly scores the Washington paper for loaded language, selective reporting, and slanted interpretations unfavorable to Israel, while Terence Prittie's less passionate piece on the British press examines the increasing tendency of the London Times to follow the Foreign Office "line." Similarly, Leon T. Hadar's thoughtful discussion of the Israeli perception of the "bad press" it gets from The New York Times gives special emphasis to the influence of White House policy on the paper's coverage, and questions the independence of the American press in its treatment of foreign policy issues. As this assorted sampling suggests, the subject of Middle East communication is as vast and complex - and, no doubt, as debatable - as the subject of the Middle East itself. G.C.

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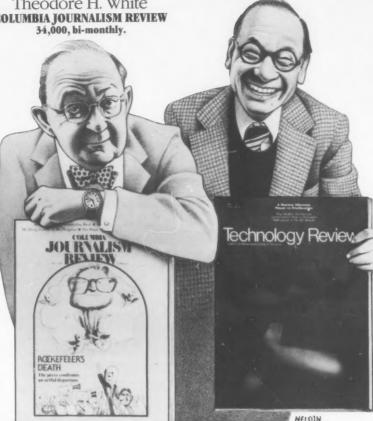
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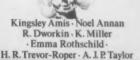
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#### NATIONAL NEWS COUNCIL

#### REPORT

#### Gay complaint against CBS upheld in part

**Issue:** Did CBS distort the goals and the impact of gay political activity in the CBS Report entitled "Gay Power, Gay Politics"?

Complaint: Randy Alfred, a San Francisco reporter, was joined by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, that city's Human Rights Commission, and the National Gay Task Force complaining that a one-hour CBS-TV report, "Gay Power, Gay Politics," broadcast April 26, 1980, "tends to demean, disgrace, and dishonor the entire journalistic profession . . . through the systematic use of hearsay, oversights, exaggerations, distortion, inflammatory buzzwords, leading questions and misleading and deceitful editing."

The documentary, described by Anchorman Harry Reasoner as a report on "how the gays of San Francisco are using the political process to further their own special interest, just like every other minority group before them," was produced by Grace Diekhaus and George Crile, with Mr. Crile serving as narrature.

The broadcast presented a succession of events, scenes, and interviews leading into, and surrounding the city's mayoralty campaign of 1979. In the November 6 primary, Acting Mayor Dianne Feinstein was opposed by Quentin Kopp, a supervisor; David Scott, a gay businessman; and seven other candidates. Mayor Feinstein, a supervisor, became mayor following the 1978 assassination of Mayor George Moscone, along with Supervisor Harvey Milk, a gay. A runoff

The reports of the National News Council are written and edited by the Council and appear in the Review as pertinent information and as a convenient reference source. Publication, which is made possible by the William and Mary Greve Foundation, does not imply approval or disapproval of the findings by the foundation or by the Review.

The Council's conclusions were reached at its meeting last September 18 and 19 at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. was forced when Mayor Feinstein received 42 percent of the votes to Mr. Kopp's 40 percent and Mr. Scott's 10 percent. In the Feinstein-Kopp runoff, both candidates sought Mr. Scott's support and that of the gay community. Mayor Feinstein was elected on December 11.

Mr. Alfred wrote that "Numerous 'minor' errors during the course of the broadcast tended uniformly towards the outrageous editorial stance of the producers: exaggerating preoccupation with sex, minimizing the gay concern for physical safety on the streets and in the bars, making all the phenomena under study appear more sudden, recent, and threatening, and making the mayor and the city's establishment seem craven and intimidated." In a nineteen-and-a-half-page, single-spaced complaint, Mr. Alfred detailed forty-four charges, many of which, he said "contribute to the cumulative effect of patterned distortion."

The supporting resolution of the Board of Supervisors charged the documentary with "total disregard for principles of good journalism" by providing "a series of images of the 'darker practices of the gay community' intended to startle viewers and to show how gays are attacking traditional values and frightening heterosexuals."

The Human Rights Commission stressed the feeling that the program had "conveyed distorted information," and the National Gay Task Force charged that it "unjustly maligned and stigmatized gay people by presenting an inaccurate and unbalanced view of the political work of San Francisco's gay community." The Gay Task Force complaint further charged that "The program ignored those gay political and business leaders in the city who are outspoken in their concern for gay problems such as employment and housing discrimination, health care, child custody, the need for social outlets other than bars, public safety, and immigration issues. And it further ignored those gay people who are active in the political process, such as Supervisor Harry Britt and (Police) Commissioner Jo Daly among others. . . .

Writing on behalf of CBS News, Robert Chandler, Vice President and Director of Public Affairs Broadcasts, said, "The complaint presents a significant number of difficulties . . . it includes some forty-four separate allegations, some of which are important, others of which are trivial, irrelevant

or clearly represent matters of opinion or judgment."

CBS did provide specific responses to each of the forty-four allegations but, "In our view," Mr. Chandler said, "the complaint boils down to three essential grievances, which we would characterize as follows:

1. The Campaign Issues - The complaint, in its essence, is that we distorted the nature of the mayoral campaign in the gay community, that we focused exclusively on the matter of 'community standards' and the demands for an apology [by the mayor for a comment in a magazine interview] to the exclusion of other issues of far more importance to the gay community. That in focusing on the issue of the apology, we made it appear that the only concern of the gay community involved matters of sexual behavior when in fact that was a lesser or minor issue. In a larger sense, the complaint suggests that at a time when gavs nationwide have not achieved what they believe to be equal rights and protection of the law, our broadcast portrayed them as obsessed not with the attainment of these objectives but with a desire only to maintain their sexual freedoms.

#### 'The audience did not applaud at that moment but shortly after' Robert Chandler, CBS

2. The Sexual Issues - The essentials of these charges are that to support the above thesis, we brought into our broadcast sensationalized issues and materials, sexual in nature, that had no connection with the campaign, that were in part activities reflected in heterosexual behavior, and that were designed to portray gays unfairly by suggesting that the acts of an irresponsible minority were being generalized to the majority of gays. Specifically in this category were those parts of the broadcast devoted to public sex in Buena Vista Park and sadomasochism. To a lesser extent, the scenes of the Beaux Arts Ball and of Castro Street fall into this category. And finally, the Harry Reasoner observation that gay leaders had been insisting on absolute sexual freedom is a subject of complaint.

3. The Applause — Although the allegation that there was no applause directly following the Mayor's apology is an issue that falls into the broader question addressed in #1 above, the specificity of the charge requires that it be addressed separately.

The Council's staff agreed basically with the CBS response grouping. Mr. Alfred acknowledged at the outset that broadcasters had a right to reach news judgments with which he might disagree. The Council staff concluded that a number of allegations in the complaint were such matters of news judgment and did not materially affect the ultimate judgment of whether the broadcast as a whole was fair and accurate.

#### The applause issue

The applause issue centers around remarks by Mayor Feinstein at a meeting of the Harvev Milk Democratic Club, a gay and lesbian organization, shortly before the runoff election. According to the narration by Mr. Crile, the mayor "apologized" for a statement attributed to her in an article published in the March 1979 issue of Ladies Home Journal. The published statement, as Mr. Crile paraphrased it, was "all she said was that gays should observe community standards. . . . That they shouldn't force their lifestyles on others. But this seemingly moderate criticism outraged the homosexual community." In the documentary, applause followed the mayor's "apology." Mr. Alfred charged that there was no applause at this point.

"It seems appropriate to deal with the allegations about applause first," CBS said in its response: "Mr. Alfred is correct. The audience did not applaud at that moment, but shortly thereafter, following her reference to the appointment of a new police chief.

'Our producers did not use the applause shot out of any desire to distort'

CBS response

"Our producers did not use the applause shot out of any desire to distort, but because they believed that the audience was in fact applauding the apology, that they were so surprised that it took them several moments to realize what had occurred and that they applauded at the next appropriate pause, two sentences later, some 25 seconds after the conclusion of the apology. And our producers also used the applause as a means of separating the mayor's prepared speech from the question and answer period depicted immediately following her apology. They note that in interviews following the meeting, it was the apology that was for the gays the highlight of the meeting and was regarded as their victory. That view was shared in the San Francisco Chronicle the next day, which reported on the mayor's apology (and drew the same conclusion as we did, reporting that the apology drew applause).

"Whatever the motivation, however, it is The right of an individual to live as he or she

clear that our producers indicated the applause out of its actual time sequence and therefore misled our viewers. This, then constitutes an acknowledgment of error and an apology for a breach of our own journalistic standards."

#### The campaign issue

Clearly, one major assertion was that CBS overstated the importance of Mayor Feinstein's "apology."

CBS responded, "There remains not the slightest doubt . . . that the issue of community standards, the demand that both the Mayor and Ouentin Kopp apologize for past statements, became the transcendent issue of the campaign for the gay community. That is true of the specific meeting at which the apology was given, and of the campaign at large insofar as it concerned the efforts of the candidate to win the gay vote.'

The San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle, on November 18, 1979, twelve days after the primary election, published an interview with David Scott, the defeated gay candidate. In that report, political writer W. E. Barnes wrote:

David Scott, whose endorsement, many feel, could tip the balance in the mayor's race, has decided to withhold that endorsement until election eve because he believes both Dianne Feinstein and Quentin Kopp have been evasive and unresponsive to the concerns of the 18,500 people who voted for him in the primary election.

Scott said he reached that conclusion after lengthy conversations in which "both candidates either talked around the questions I raised or gave unsatisfactory responses.

Mr. Scott's questions, the Examiner report said, included concerns within "the homosexual and progressive communities" over the appointment of a new police chief, the appointment of police commissioners. affirmative action for women, the retention of district elections, rent control laws, the floating of low-interest mortgage revenue bonds for moderate and low-income home buyers, and Mr. Kopp's "embrace of former Mayor Joseph Alioto, who refused to meet with organized groups of gay men and lesbians while in office.'

Mr. Barnes wrote, "But the major issue - even more important than the next chief, he (Mr. Scott) said - is specific 'highly offensive and degrading comments' made by both candidates in the recent past that continue to rankle the city's gay community."

What Mayor Feinstein said in the Ladies Home Journal statement that the gay community found to be "degrading" was the fol-

chooses can become offensive. The gay community is going to have to face this. It's fine for us to live here respecting each other's lifestyles, but that doesn't mean imposing them on others. I do not want San Franciscans to set up a backlash.

Mr. Kopp, during a Board of Supervisors meeting in 1979, had said, "Tolerance yes, glorification no," when a certificate of merit was awarded to Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, two lesbians, for their work on behalf of human rights causes in the city.

The Examiner's report continued, quoting Mr. Scott:

I discussed these remarks with both candidates. These comments can set the tenor for their administrations, and I feel they should make some kind of modifying statement. They are completely offensive and unacceptable.

Both Mayor Feinstein and Mr. Kopp appeared to plead their cases at the Democratic club meeting mentioned earlier. The San Francisco Chronicle, on November 21, in a report headlined GAYS HEAR SOME APOLogies, stated:

San Francisco's two mayoral candidates, appearing contrite while courting votes that could sway the December 11 election, told a gay political club last night that they were both sorry for their allegedly anti-gay remarks in the past.

"If I said things that offended the community, I apologize," Mayor Dianne Feinstein told the Harvey Milk Democratic Club, referring to her published remarks that gays should not flaunt their behavior publicly.

"Maybe my choice of words was wrong," said Supervisor Quentin Kopp, of his slightly famous "Tolerance yes, glorification no" comment about gays living together.

When the votes were tallied, Feinstein had scraped together 73 votes to 14 for Kopp exactly the 60 percent needed for the club's endorsement. Thirty-four members voted to endorse no one.

To Mr. Alfred's charge that CBS, in concentrating on the "community standards" issue, relegated other, more important issues to a minor role, CBS responded that "issues that surfaced other than the question of an apology were the issue of police protection against harassment from police and civilians alike, and to a lesser degree, the issue of proportional gay representation on nonelective bodies. These issues were covered in the broadcast. Early in the broadcast George Crile reported that as Mayor Feinstein began her campaign, 'the gays were mad at her for firing the pro-gay chief of police, a man counted on as their ally.'

CBS then showed the mayor addressing a meeting of gays on that subject.

To further support CBS's claim that the program did cover other issues in the campaign, Mr. Chandler cited Mr. Crile's depiction of Halloween night on Castro Street:

CRILE: For Captain Jeffries [George Jeffries of the San Francisco Police Department], Halloween has become a nightmare. Each year on this night, more and more toughs have been coming into the gay areas to beat up homosexuals. The night of the City Hall riots [which followed the sentencing of Supervisor Dan White for the assassination of Mayor Moscone and Supervisor Milk], Jeffries' own men had burst into a bar on Castro Street, attacking with billy clubs. It had been called a policiot. But on this Halloween night no matter what their feelings, Jeffries' men were supposed to protect the gays."

'It was also essential to differentiate attitudes between private and public acts'

CBS said, "The scenes which followed include interviews Crile had with Captain Jeffries about police behavior and with Cleve Jones [a gay activist who was serving as a "Monitor" within the gay community] about the gay hostility toward the police and their insistence that they rather than the police provide security in the area. Later we show the police moving in and the gays' anger at their actions."

CBS also noted that in the sequence involving the mayor's apology before the Democratic club, Mr. Crile said "... it wasn't just an apology. She'd offered them a gay police commissioner and political appointments in proportion to their numbers in the city."

Mr. Chandler said, "In sum, the *only* issues which surfaced above and beyond the community standards issue in the campaign in the gay community were these issues of police behavior and protection and appointment to political posts, and these were covered."

"In the opinion of our two journalists who had followed the campaign throughout," Mr. Chandler said, "it was their news judgment that the community standards-apology issue was transcendent in the gay community, that it was the single issue that separated the two candidates. . . . This was, of course, an editorial judgment, but one based on months of reporting and close observation."

To Mr. Alfred's charge that Mr. Crile gave 'his own voice-over, truncated, watered-down and confused version of the Ladies Home Journal comment,' and characterized it unfairly as 'seemingly moderate,' Mr. Chandler said, 'It is a matter of regret to us that we did not quote directly from the Ladies Home Journal but chose to characterize the Mayor's words. In retrospect it would have been more effective to

have used the full quotation. Its inclusion would have made the escalating anger during the campaign about her statement more understandable."

In interview after interview, gays told the Council that the mayor's remarks, either as reported in the *Ladies Home Journal*, or as characterized by Mr. Crile, were "offensive." It was obvious to the Council's staff that apologies from both the mayor and Mr. Kopp were high on the gay community's agenda.

The staff examination also revealed the reasons why the mayor's and Mr. Kopp's statements were anathema to the gays. Supervisor Britt, who stated that he was interviewed "at great length" by Mr. Crile, but who did not appear on the program, put it this way:

Basically, the mayor was saying that she hasn't anything against gay people as long as they behave themselves. . . . She was giving support to that strategy for gay people which means, "Think what other people want you to feel before you decide what you're going to feel." That's psychological death for gay people. And when we say we want to set our own standards, as Cleve Jones said on the broadcast, we mean simply that we want to be free to explore, in ways natural to us, who we are, and to have a moral sense that comes out of yourself and not out of conformity to the world.

#### The sexual issues

The complaint charged CBS with "exaggerating preoccupation with sex." In its response, CBS interpreted this as meaning that the broadcast "unfairly portrayed the gays of San Francisco by focusing on sexual matters unconnected with the mayoral campaign. Specifically, they focused on the Buena Vista Park sequence and on the section of the broadcast devoted to sadomasochism." Other challenges concerned sequences involving San Francisco's Beaux Arts Ball, Castro Street on Halloween night, and a program in the schools to "demystify" homosexuality.

#### **Buena Vista Park**

Buena Vista Park is a thirty-seven-acre tract neighboring on San Francisco's Castro Street District. It was introduced by Mr. Crile with a question: "... should public parks be used for sex?" He continued:

Today it's one of the pieces of territory claimed by the men of the gay community. For the average person, it may not be dangerous to go into this park, but when we came here with our camera crew a group of gay men surrounded us and forced us to leave. A week later we came back without our crew, but with a home-movie camera. This is what we found. From sunup to sundown, men everywhere — hundreds of them coming to this park each day for public sex.

There followed in this sequence an interview with a family living on the edge of the park. A young boy and a young girl told what they had seen, and their mother and father expressed their anxieties.

In response to the contention that CBS presented no evidence "that sex in Buena Vista Park was an issue in the campaign," Mr. Chandler said, "It was germane. The mayor never stated what she meant when she said that gays should not impose their lifestyles on others. . . . It seemed to us mandatory to examine precisely those elements of gay lifestyles which involved impositions on the rest of the community, which were potential areas of the very sort of backlash the Mayor expressed concern about. It was also essential to differentiate the attitudes between private and public acts. As was pointed out, the 'glory holes' were, in the view of the city, legal because they involved private acts between consenting adults. . . . But the use of a public park for sexual intercourse clearly falls outside the category of private acts, and the fact that such activities were disruptive to residents of the neighbor-

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hood was relevant to any discussion of the 'imposition of lifestyles' on others.'

Burleigh Sutton, a gay businessman who was interviewed on several occasions on "Gay Power, Gay Politics," told the Council that he was interviewed by Mr. Crile for from two and a half to three hours, and that not once did Mr. Crile ask him how he felt about Buena Vista Park. "I don't know of anyone who is responsible," he said, "who feels that the Buena Vista situation should be condoned or encouraged. It's a matter of embarrassment to most of the people I know. It's a small percentage of the gay population that's involved in that scene, and we don't even condone that."

#### Sadomasochism

The subject of sadomasochism came into the documentary as a major element during the Halloween party sequence on Castro Street when Mr. Crile encountered Mel Wald, a gay who identified himself as a part of the gay security force and said, "My ordinary work is a- an- sadist-masochist and consultant, or best known as an S & M consultant," to which he added, "Part of my profession is I teach police departments, coroners, doctors." He went on to say, "so that when they see a body with certain ties, certain implements around, how to distinguish whether it was a forcible, non-forcible, whether the bondage was something that they got into or didn't, whether it was willing or not."

Later, sadomasochism was reintroduced with a statement by Mr. Crile: "The problem for straight politicians courting the gay vote is that some things about the homosexual community here are undeniably troubling but politically dangerous to challenge. There are things which divide the straight and gay communities, and I suppose one of them are sexual mores." Burleigh Sutton replied "Very definitely," and the camera took viewers into a sadomasochism "toy" shop, where Mr. Crile asked a clerk, "What kind of people will use this sort of thing? The is it the lunatic fringe of the community?" The clerk replied, "It's - no, it's everybody. It's bankers, lawyers, doctors. We sell to all types of clientele."

A few moments later Mr. Crile posed a question to Charles K. (Rusty) Epps, another gay businessman:

CRILE: There are a number of things that happen in the gay community, which go from the leather bars to the glory holes and to the S & M parlors. Do you all support all these things, or do you draw a line on some of them and say, "We ought to clean it up?"

EPPS: I'm willing to take it. I support them, with the proviso that these are things that people are doing in private, that if — if you want to go to the glory holes or you want to go to an S & M bar, you go there knowing that's what it is. It's the choice of the individual to do what he or she wishes to do.

The sequence continued with a brief interview with San Francisco's Coroner Boyd Stephens and a visit with Mr. Wald in a sadomasochism "torture chamber." Following the sound of crashing chains, Mr. Crile asked Mr. Wald: "What are these things, Mel, here?" Mr. Wald replied, "They're different toys to be used in different manner through the different sessions."

'There was a skirmish, but it occurred late when only 200 or 300 people were left'

Police Captain George Jeffries

CRILE: We last met Mel Wald on Halloween. On this night he took us to one of San Francisco's commercial establishments where you can rent a torture chamber. This one is licensed, perfectly legal.

wald: Board of Education, very interesting. It has the holes, and when it's used it can leave a lot of interesting marks. Regulation night stick — wonderful to be used as a dildo.

Preceding and following the torture chamber scene, Mr. Crile interviewed Dr. Stephens. His first question to the coroner was, ". . . about a new kind of problem that you're facing. Could you tell us about it?"

DR. STEPHENS: We've been seeing for a while now about 10 percent of our homicides related to homosexual behavior, and this ranges from just homosexual-type behavior — an individual who goes to a bar, picks up another person of their own sex — through and including sadomasochism with bondage and severe injury.

Responding to the objections to the emphasis on sadomasochism in the broadcast, Mr. Chandler said, "Again, there is no denial that S & M is practiced by a portion of the gay community."

Mr. Alfred contended that S & M "is predominately heterosexual," and gave as his reference a KQED-TV documentary titled "S-M: One Foot Out of the Closet," broadcast on February 11 and May 26, 1980. Phil Bronstein of KQED-TV told the Council that he determined in his research that sadomasochism activity in the Bay Area was about 90 percent straight. It is predominately heterosexual," he said. This was confirmed by James Hillier, owner of The Chateau, a sadomasochism center featured in the broadcast, who told the Council that his clientele "is about 99 to 99.8 percent heterosexual."

In its expanded response, CBS said ". . . we pointed out in the film [that] The Chateau

was Mr. Wald's choice.... There are many other S & M establishments in the city which cater exclusively to the gay community."

Mr. Alfred said Dr. Stephens had acknowledged that the 10 percent figure for homicides related to homosexual behavior included the killing of homosexuals by heterosexuals. He also said, "Crile earlier in the show estimated the gay portion of the population at 12 percent to 25 percent, but fails to remind his audience of that here. This omission fits CBS's editorial pattern."

"No one really knows how many people are gay in San Francisco," Dr. Stephens told the Council. "You'll have estimates ranging from a few thousand up to an estimate that would make almost every person in the city a gay. If there are 100,000 gays in San Francisco and the rate of gay-related homicides is 10 percent that makes a difference. Ten percent would be a low rate. It is going up. In approximately one half of the homicides in volving homosexuals the killer either is not a gay, or the identity of the killer is unknown. I would say that S & M activities involve a relatively small portion of homosexuals in general, but it's somewhat higher here sim-

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ply because we happen to have a larger portion of people operating establishments in that field."

Mr. Chandler said that "The complaint overlooks some significant differences between homosexual and heterosexual S & M. For one thing, to the extent that heterosexual S & M exists, it is not institutionalized but in fact is an 'underground' activity. While it is true that its practitioners buy or rent equipment from such establishments as depicted, there is no other public manifestation of their activity. Not so in the case of homosexual S & M, which is institutionalized to the extent that so-called S & M or 'leather' bars are an institution in the gay community. They are public establishments which serve as a gathering place for homosexual sadomasochists, and to one degree or another, some sadomasochism takes place in a number of them. A second significant difference is that while homosexual leaders are quick to defend homosexual S & M, we have observed no one among heterosexuals who would defend heterosexual S & M, at least publicly."

#### The Halloween party

A sequence involving a Halloween party on Castro Street in the gay community was introduced on the broadcast as follows:

CRILE: The problem is that the gay lifestyle was already creating a backlash in the city. Nowhere is this more apparent than Halloween night on Castro Street. It's a custom in this old family neighborhood to begin Halloween with a party for the children. The tradition remains, but since the gays took over here, they've introduced a new experience for the kiddies.

There followed a scene showing a frightened, or apprehensive girl with film cuts back and forth from the girl to costumed men, one of whom was clad in a sexually explicit costume.

Mr. Alfred quoted the girl's mother as saying that her daughter "was reacting to being shoved onto the stage. And she was generally freaked out, since she and I had just been separated from another mother and daughter. There was a real crush. It was terrible." Mr. Alfred said Mrs. Trina Robbins, the mother of the girl, blamed "the violence in the air" on "non-gay punks from outside the neighborhood" who were there to "hassle people."

William Paul, a lecturer on Interdisciplinary Studies at San Francisco State University, who attended the party as part of a research project sponsored by The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, told the Council, "I did not observe any sexually explicit costumes or inappropriate behavior in the vicinity of the kids' party, which was actually quite early in the eve-

ning. I recall the girl and the filming and . . . felt she was suffering from stage fright. . . . It seems quite likely that serious distortions of actual events were made in editing. . . . The social atmosphere at the children's party, although quite crowded, was one of warmth and intergroup conciliation, hardly the lurid, threatening images portrayed. Parents and relatives participated."

Responding, CBS declared that "as to the Alfred claim that one of the little girls . . . was frightened by 'non-gay punks from outside the neighborhood' instead of by the stream of homosexuals dressed in bizarre costumes on the stage, we will allow the film to speak for itself."

Later in this sequence, Mr. Crile stated:

As the night wore on, it looked as though there would be no major confrontation between straights and gays, but it had been an ordeal for Captain Jeffries's men. For hours now they had stood by silently as the gays provocatively taunted them.

Mr. Alfred said that the video "shows someone in a buglike costume acting like a bug, perhaps intending to amuse more than to taunt. In any case, the major taunting in this scene takes place as Crile repeatedly and unsuccessfully tries to elicit anti-gay responses from two policemen, one a commanding officer. To their credit, and to the credit of the San Francisco Police Department, both officers remain resolutely calm, nonjudgmental, and professional. . . . "

'Again, there is no denial that S & M is practiced by a portion of the gay community'

CBS replied, ". . . surely he is aware that the gay leaders on Castro Street were deeply concerned about police attitudes. A number of policemen had recently attacked gays on Castro Street. . . . The questions Crile asked the police were the questions on the minds of the gay leaders that night. As seen at the end of the Halloween sequence, those concerns were well founded. At about 2 A.M. the police moved onto Castro Street and began bullying the gays in a manner that only barely escaped breaking into a truly dangerous confrontation."

Police Captain George Jeffries, a district commander, told the Council, "There were from 30,000 to 35,000 people there that night, and after it was over we had made about fifteen arrests, with one-half of them non-gays from outside the area. About three of the arrests were for assaults. The rest were for drunken behaviour. I wrote in my report that the night was totally orderly. There was

a skirmish, but it occurred late, when only about 200 or 300 people were left — mostly drunks who didn't want to go home. We made eight of our arrests then, and withdrew. Things like that look bad on film, but it really was over in about ten or fifteen minutes. A relatively minor story. I don't think the presence of a television crew had any effect."

#### The demystification program

One of Mr. Alfred's major charges was that Mr. Crile editorialized in the documentary when he commented on the mayor's financial support of the Human Rights Foundation's program in the schools for the "demystification" of homosexuality. The relevant segment of the broadcast went as follows:

CRILE: For these men, political power is only one of many goals. Bob Sass is chairman of the Human Rights Foundation. He's doing something that frightens many heterosexuals. He's working to introduce what the gays call a 'demystification program' into the schools.

SUTTON: Its basic goal is exactly what it says. It's the education of the general public. It's not an attempt to convert, but simply acquaint children of a formidable age that differences exist with respect to sexual orientation.

CRILE: And will it present homosexuality as a — alternative, normal life style?

SUTTON: Yes.

CRILE: Because -

SUTTON: I consider it a normal life style, certainly.

Jerry Berg, former president of the foundation, commented, "It was exciting for us when it came time to raise some substantial funds for the Human Rights Foundation. We invited a number of city officials, including the mayor. The price of the evening was \$500."

CRILE: What you're saying is that the mayor of San Francisco personally contributed \$500 to the Human Rights Foundation, which is working to introduce the teaching of homosexuality into the schools?

BERG: That's one of our programs.

CRILE: That's incredible, isn't it?

BERG: Well, it's — it's satisfying to us, because we feel so strongly about these programs that we love to have support from everywhere, and — in the mayor's office it's — it's most welcome.

Criticizing Mr. Crile's usage of the word "incredible," Mr. Alfred cited a comment made by Mr. Crile on a follow-up program titled "Has the Truth Been Told?" broadcast by KPIX-TV, the San Francisco CBS affiliate, on the same evening as "Gay Power, Gay Politics." Mr. Crile said:

I think that . . . one thing that San Francisco can do, if Kinsey is right and one out of every ten Americans are gay, we all have to learn to live to-



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gether. San Francisco should be the city which teaches the nation how to do that.

Mr. Alfred said, "The demystification program is a conscious attempt by straight and gay San Franciscans 'to learn to live together,' to replace queer-bashing hatred with understanding. If Crile found the program so 'incredible,' maybe he should have covered it. He would have learned that it was motivated by the same problem of anti-gay violence which CBS ignored as an issue in the mayoral campaign."

In its detailed response, CBS said, "Mr. Alfred misrepresents the Crile response ['incredible'] by not citing the full exchange. That response was both a reaction and a question to the three interviewees. Crile was acknowledging the unprecedented action that Dianne Feinstein, a traditional heterosexual politician, had taken by publicly supporting such a highly controversial homosexual program. The interviewees acknowledged the novelty and uniqueness of the mayor's position with a laugh," followed by Mr. Berg's remark that "It was exciting for us."

The Human Rights Foundation, incorporated in August 1977, is a tax-exempt organization whose purpose is to eliminate "those perceptions concerning human rights and human sexuality that limit the full self-expression of all members of society." In describing its "Demystifying Homosexuality Project," funded by the Playboy and Hazen Foundations, the Human Rights Foundation

'This year the Beaux Arts Ball became a major stop on the campaign trail' George Crile, CBS reporter

says it "provides carefully selected and trained gay male and lesbian speakers to Bay Area high schools and junior colleges (outside the city of San Francisco) who "are invited . . . to answer questions from students in such high school courses as Health Education and Family Life Education and in such junior college courses as Counseling and Marriage and the Family."

The project, which started in the fall of 1978 after a pilot program in 1977, has been invited by the San Francisco Unified School District's Advisory Committee on Health and Family Life Education to provide scheduling assistance for lesbian and gay male speakers in certain San Francisco high schools, to meet with administrators, counselors, teachers, or students in their classes.

Robert W. Sass, president of the foundation, told the Council's staff, "The benefits of the program have been almost universally acknowledged and I have nothing in the foundation's record in the way of a complaint from anyone, teachers, students, or parents."

Mr. Sass said, "What is very true is that what we hear consistently from teachers and students is that it is usually the first time that many of the students have had a chance to speak with someone who is gay. They carry around enormously strong stereotypes and myths about what gay people are like, and they find that gay people are really just like they are except that their sexual preferences are different.

"For me, the sadness was that there was no effort made by CBS to explore the program in depth and to look at it with real objectivity. Our program does not teach homosexuality. It introduces students to the fact that there are homosexuals living in their community, and that sometimes they are in their midst."

#### The Beaux Arts Ball

Immediately preceding a sequence in the documentary photographed at the city's annual Beaux Arts Ball, a conversation took place between Mr. Crile and Cleve Jones in which Mr. Crile asked: "Do you feel there'll be a gay mayor some day?"

JONES: "I don't feel certain about anything. There were a lot of gay people doing a lot of work in Germany before Hitler, and there was a huge movement — the German homosexual emancipation movement — and it was wiped out. The odds, I think, are still against us, but I'm optimistic."

CRILE: "It was a very decadent society, if you remember it."
JONES: "Yeah."

CRILE: "The Berlin cafe society. Isn't it a sign of decadence when you have so many gays emerging, breaking apart all of the values of a society?"

JONES: "I don't see that as a sign of decadence. Perhaps the values of society are decadent. Perhaps they need to be broken up."

The scene shifted immediately to the Beaux Arts Ball at the Civic Auditorium, where Mr. Crile, in a voice-over, said, "The Beaux Arts Ball. It's a tradition in San Francisco: a night when gay men dress up as women and anything else that suits their fancy; a night when men can compete in a beauty contest for the prettiest costume. . . . It's an old institution in the gay community but with a new wrinkle: This year, the Beaux Arts Ball became a major stop on the campaign trail."

Both Mayor Feinstein and Supervisor Kopp attended the ball.

"CBS," Mr. Alfred said, "fails to inform its audience that the Beaux Arts Ball is a Halloween charity event that benefits community organizations. Wayne Friday, president of the sponsoring San Francisco Tavern Guild Foundation, said that the foundation distributes proceeds from the ball to service organizations in the gay and straight communities. Reporting this would have made the ball seem less 'decadent' and more like a traditional costume ball appropriate to the season.''

CBS responded that "He [Alfred] apparently would have us believe that this event, also known as the Drag Queens Ball, is not primarily a gay affair. But it would be a gross distortion to describe it in any other way."

In reference to Mr. Crile's description of the ball as "a night when gay men dress up as women. . . . " Mr. Alfred quoted Bob Ross, publisher of the Bay Area Reporter and a former 'Emperor' closely associated with the city's gay 'royal courts,' as saying that about 40 percent of the costume competition entrants and 40 percent of the audience in 1979 were heterosexual. Pam Brunger. features editor of the San Francisco Examiner, told the Council, "No one can say with certainty how many of those in costume at the ball are heterosexual, and how many are gay. Do you ask them at the door? Most certainly there are heterosexuals in the audience, and undoubtedly there are some in costume, but it is known as a 'gay event.' "

Mr. Alfred said that politicking at the ball has been going on for years, and that "State Senator Milton Marks, Mayor George Moscone, Sheriff Richard Hongisto, and Supervisors Feinstein and Carol Ruth Silver . . . had all attended the ball in years past."

"It is true," the CBS response said, "that certain San Francisco politicians have attended this event in the past. But so far as we know, 1979 was the first year that the principal candidates in the mayor's race all came.

Last year marked the coming of age of gay political power in San Francisco and all the candidates acknowledged it with their appearances at the Beaux Arts Ball."

The Council's staff came to believe that the central issue underlying all of the charges and countercharges centered on the following commentary by Mr. Reasoner at the end of "Gay Power, Gay Politics":

It may be that San Francisco is unique and it couldn't happen anywhere else. But if Kinsey is right, upwards of 20-million Americans are homosexual and as we saw at the march in Washington last October, gay political organizations are acting all across the country. The right of homosexuals to organize like any other minority seeking to further its own interests is no longer in question. The question is, what will those interests be? Will they include a demand for absolute sexual freedom, as they did in San Francisco? And if so, will this challenge to traditional values provoke far

more hostility and controversy when it is put to the test elsewhere?

It is no longer a matter of whether homosexuals will achieve political power, but what they will attempt to do with it.

The key words in this closing passage are "absolute sexual freedom." Mr. Aifred said, "For the last words on the show, after an hour of setting up its audience, CBS trots out Harry Reasoner with the unsupported declaration that gays in San Francisco demanded 'absolute sexual freedom."

Mr. Chandler, in his response, said, "We believe the characterization is valid, for all of the reasons cited in this response. The gay leadership has insisted on the right to set its own standards of sexual behaviour, it rejects any interference with glory holes or S & M bars and it avoids or refuses to condemn public sexual activity in Buena Vista Park. It is impossible to conclude otherwise."

Mr. Chandler called attention to this exchange in the documentary;

CRILE: Burleigh, Jerry, Rusty, what if Mayor Feinstein had gone through the campaign making the same kind of comments she did to the *Ladies Home Journal* and said there are too many sexual excesses and it's against the customs and traditions of this city. What would have happened to her in terms of the gay vote, Jerry?

BERG: She would not have had it.

SUTTON: Jerry can talk about the gay community and its standards, but the Mayor has difficulty. If you're not a member of our minority, I think you're on really shaky footing by pointing to it in general terms and saying clean up your act.

Mr. Sutton told the Council, "I don't think that any responsible gay activist in San Francisco, or across the country, is advocating absolute sexual freedom as a criteria. What the gay community is concerned about is police harassment, homophobic harassment which transmits itself into physical violence, and an opportunity in the job market, basically, the same things that any minority is out to correct.

"In terms of sexual freedom, certainly there is an element of the gay movement — the minority exists because of its sexual orientation — which has to include the word sexuality in terms of its goals. But what the gay movement seeks to achieve is a fair, unbiased approach to an individual, irrespective of his or her sexual orientation. The gay and lesbian community doesn't ask for any favor with respect to sexual orientation. It asks simply to be treated fairly."

Mayor Feinstein, in an interview with the Council representative, said, "The CBS people came into this thing with a personal bias. They did a show that permitted that bias to come through. They ignored a community, a community of gays who go to work

every day, who are in the mainstream of the city's life, who are generally ideologically conservative. They concentrated on the fringe element. They did it to frighten."

Police Captain Jeffries said he felt that the documentary "dealt with extremes, overlooking the fact that the vast majority, I'd say 95 percent, of the gay population is going to work every day, just making a living, getting by, upgrading their property. Now, we, the police, deal with extremes. We don't deal with many normal people, so to speak. We deal with those who aren't. But extremes are news, I suppose."

'The complaint
with respect to the election
campaign
is found unwarranted'

Referring to Mr. Reasoner's comment on "absolute sexual freedom," the mayor wrote, "That is a false assumption. The gay community did not demand, nor do they have, 'absolute sexual freedom' in San Francisco. Their sexual standards are different from those of the 'straight' community, but the laws that govern sexual conduct apply equally to gay and straight citizens."

Action: The CBS documentary, "Gay Power, Gay Politics," touched many sensitivities and provoked passionate reaction and protest.

The central complaint is, as noted in the staff analysis, unusually complex. It has required grouping under three headings: the political campaign, the sexual issues, and the applause issue.

On the political campaign issue, it is clear that the mayor and her rival in the runoff election acted in standard political fashion in seeking to win the vote of the gay community. CBS News was not alone in its editorial judgment that Mayor Feinstein's apology for what she said in the Ladies Home Journal about gays and community standards was a pivotal factor in her endorsement by the gay community. Both San Francisco daily newspapers accorded special importance to that apology. Its significance was further underscored by a respected gay leader's flat statement that Mayor Feinstein would not have received the gay vote if she had continued to make such comments. Elsewhere in the program, CBS did note other political issues and specifically the gays' calls for greater security against violence by heterosexuals and by what they consider police harassment.

For these reasons the complaint with respect to the election campaign is found unwarranted.

The Council finds unfairness in the presentation of the sexual issues. By concentrating on certain flamboyant examples of homosexual behavior, the program tended to reinforce stereotypes. The program also exaggerated political concessions to gays and made those concessions appear as threats to public morals and decency.

The Council exempts from this criticism the program's attention to Buena Vista Park. Inquiry by the Council's staff confirmed the existence of widespread opposition to the usurpation of the park for sexual purposes. The many hearings before public bodies show that its misuse was a subject laden with political significance, whether or not it arose specifically in the mayoralty campaign.

However, justification cannot be found for the degree of attention given to sadomasochism or the treatment of the Beaux Arts Ball and the Halloween sequences.

Authoritative sources agree that sadomasochism is practiced extensively by heterosexuals, yet the broadcast treats it as distinctively homosexual. The Chateau, pictured as an example of sadomasochistic indulgence, is owned by and patronized almost exclusively by heterosexuals.

The Halloween events were presented in a manner confusing and misleading. The children's party early in the evening was made to appear frightening because of the gays' presence at the party, fortifying parental fears about the safety of their children.

The Council finds troublesome the abrupt transition from the discussion of decadence to the Beaux Arts Ball. The Beaux Arts Ball, held up as an example of decadence, is an accepted community event in San Francisco. While sponsored by gays, it is also attended by heterosexuals, and the proceeds go to many community programs.

In dealing with the "demystification" program in the schools, CBS failed to make clear that supporters see as its purpose a reduction in the danger of harassment and violence by heterosexuals against homosexuals. CBS conveyed so little solid information that it left a frightening impression, fostered in part by pictures of men embracing and kissing. The Council's investigation showed, by contrast, that civic leaders generally view the program as a useful bridge for better understanding between the gay and the majority communities. While there is unquestionably room for argument on the appropriateness of such a project in the schools or on how it is executed, what came through on the CBS program was that the demystification project was simply a gay thrust to promote homosexuality in the schools, with the financial support of the mayor.

Mr. Reasoner asked at the end of the broadcast whether the gays' national political

objectives will include a "demand for absolute sexual freedom, as they did in San Francisco." The undue emphasis on sadomasochism and the distortions of the Halloween party and the demystification program contribute to a picture of what Mr. Reasoner means by a demand for absolute sexual freedom. The reality is that homosexuals are not monolithic in their behavior or their political objectives. Many abhor public sex; their principal objective is a climate of tolerance that permits them to operate in the mainstream of their communities. The unwillingness of gays in this category to break ranks with extremists by repudiating more flamboyant demands created reportorial problems for CBS but did not relieve it of its obligation to present a fair picture.

The Council finds the complaint warranted as it applies to the treatment of sadomasochism, the demystification project, the Halloween party and the transition from a discussion of decadence to the Beaux Arts Ball.

As for the applause issue, CBS News has acknowledged that through the insertion of applause where there was none after the mayor's apology it violated the network's own standards and has offered an apology for that violation. Also the network is candid in its response that it would have been wiser to have reported in full the mayor's comments in the *Ladies Home Journal* instead of paraphrasing them. The Council welcomes CBS's candor in both these admissions.

**Concurring:** Abel, Brady, Ghiglione, Huston, Isaacs, Lawson, Maynard, Pulitzer, and Williams.

Dissenting (in part): Rusher.

Dissenting: Bell.

Concurring opinion by Mr. Lawson: I concur with the majority but with an additional word. The CBS report did not do what Mr. Reasoner said it would do. The report did not assess the meaning of the political power of the gay community for the 1980s. Whatever "absolute sexual freedom" means, gay leadership did not make that the primary objective of political action. By omission of those objectives, and by omission of an analysis of those objectives this documentary is severely flawed. As news it fails to feed the public mind.

Concurring opinion by Mr. Maynard and Mr. Williams: We concur with the majority in its principal findings which essentially were that the network dealt with the visible and flamboyant aspects of gay life, but ignored other essential aspects of the life and concerns of that community.

The Council's findings gave too little attention to the overall thrust and effect of the

CBS effort. That broadcast portrayed the gay political movement in threatening and sensational terms that ignored the facts of discrimination against members of the gay community. It failed to note the pervasive discrimination against gays in the job market. It failed to note the discrimination against gays in domestic relations disputes where the custody of offspring is at stake. It barely noted the problems of unequal justice with which gay people cope daily. Nor did it fully explain the phenomenon of anti-gay violence in the streets.

The interests of accuracy, fairness, and balance were more poorly served than the majority opinion would suggest. To the degree that CBS News failed those interests in this case, it failed all those it sought to serve.

Dissenting, in part, opinion by Mr. Rusher: I concur in the Council's careful and discriminating assessment of various aspects of this documentary. But I disagree with the charge of "unfairness" in regard to sexual topics — not because the documentary was a balanced presentation of homosexual life, but because it never pretended to be one.

In producing (as it chose to do) a

'I cannot support
The Council's finding
in a number
of specific features'
Jeffrey Bell, News Council member

documentary on the political impact of the gay community in San Francisco and elsewhere, including potential backlashes against it, CBS could hardly avoid depicting at considerable length certain sorts of homosexual behavior that are particularly visible and offensive to heterosexuals. In implying, as I believe the documentary does, that the producers share the sense of offense at such behavior, it is surely well within the protection of the First Amendment.

I also have some trouble agreeing that, as the Council seems to think, no sensible person could find anything ''decadent'' about the Beaux Arts Ball. We are in danger of hurting the feelings of its promoters.

Dissenting opinion by Mr. Bell: I cannot support the Council's findings in a number of specific features of the CBS documentary, "Gay Power, Gay Politics," nor the overall finding of unfairness in the treatment of "sexual issues." Given what I take to be the thesis of the documentary — that the coming of age of homosexual politics in San Francisco has significantly altered the city's standard of acceptable public behavior — all of the scenes objected to are permissible and even desirable.

When looking for an alteration of community standards, one must search for the toleration of bizarre events in public. To dwell on the private or commonplace would be the height of irrelevance. CBS's decision to concentrate on ''certain flamboyant examples of homosexual behavior'' is therefore justified, even assuming the Council is correct in asserting that these examples will reinforce stereotypes.

I find no evidence, in the Council's opinion or elsewhere, that the program "exaggerated political concessions to gays" or unfairly made the concessions "appear as threats to public morals and decency."

I agree with the Council that CBS should have made it clear that sadomasochism has a heterosexual component, but can find no error in the overall depiction of sadomasochism as a widely accepted part of San Francisco's gay scene. Certainly its importance was underlined by Mayor Feinstein's decision to campaign in the so-called "leather bars" with gay political activist David Scott in the closing days of the runoff campaign.

The ambivalence of the scene at the children's party is not, in my view, sufficient to sustain an overall finding against the coverage of Halloween. Nor is the sudden transition from the interview on decadence to the Beaux Arts Ball a reason to invalidate CBS's coverage of the ball and its social and political significance.

I find especially disturbing the Council's condemnation of the documentary for conveying "so little solid information" on the demystification campaign, particularly since nothing CBS did say was on its face either inaccurate or beyond the bounds of permissible opinion. The Council here is on the edge of second-guessing CBS on its selection of subject matter.

Despite some minor factual errors and the acknowledged major error of misplacing the applause, the documentary taken as a whole was, in my judgment, an effective examination of an unusually complex and troubling issue. The question of "community standards" is important and appropriate and the treatment by producers Crile and Diekhaus is well within the bounds of permissible journalistic practice. I hope the Council's majority's finding will not discourage further examination of a growing issue in our society.

Space limits required extensive condensation of the News Council's full report on the gay complaint against CBS. Those interested in the unedited text can obtain it by sending \$1 to cover copying and mailing costs to The National New Council, 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10023. It was also necessary to hold the reports of Council action on two cases until a future issue of the Review.

## FBI criticism is withdrawn by Council

On September 21, 1979, The National News Council condemned the FBI for allegedly "deliberately and outrageously" maligning Jean Seberg because of her support for the Black Panther Party.

Documents recently released by the FBI show that while the agency contemplated leaking embarrassing personal information about Ms. Seberg, that information was not in fact officially released by the agency.

The action of the Council was unfair to the FBI.

With respect to the press, the Council holds that news organizations have an obligation to publish no embarrassing or derogatory information about individuals without independent verification.

Concurring: Abel, Bell, Brady, Ghiglione, Huston, Isaacs, Lawson, Maynard, McKay, Pulitzer, Rusher, and Williams.

## 'Enquirer' hyped VA hospitals crime story

**Issue:** Did the *National Enquirer* exaggerate and misrepresent the incidence of crime at Veterans Administration hospitals?

Complaint: The Veterans Administration, Department of Medicine and Surgery, complained that a National Enquirer article of April 8 "painted a ludicrously distorted image of the Veterans Administration's (VA) health care system."

"Briefly stated," wrote Robert R. Putnam, VA Public Information Officer, "the complaint is that the *Enquirer* published a story based on sensational allegations from irresponsible sources. . . Further, *Enquirer* reporters and editorial staff ignored information and comments supplied by responsible sources that would have provided critically needed balance to the story."

The Enquirer article was headlined HELP-LESS HOSPITALIZED VETS PREYED ON BY VIOLENT CRIMINALS. It claimed that an influx

of "hardened criminals" had turned the nation's VA hospitals into "criminal cesspools where patients, staff and the VA's police fear for their lives."

The article said that "an official estimates 40 percent of VA patients have been convicted of crimes." According to an unnamed VA police lieutenant, conditions at VA hospitals were the product of a "mutually beneficial scheme" to fill empty VA beds and ease overcrowding in state prisons.

A VA medical center in Menlo Park, California, was described by the *Enquirer* as a "tax-supported chamber of horrors where murder, extortion, dope dealing, theft, prostitution, drug overdose and suicide are commonplace."

"A one-year study of crimes at the Menlo Park and nearby Palo Alto VA facilities," the article went on, "shows narcotics thefts up 500 percent, assault with a deadly weapon up 400 percent and vandalism up 333 percent."

A former liaison officer between the Palo Alto and Menlo Park VA facilities was reported as saying that "murders at the two hospitals average about four or five a year and that drug overdoses occur weekly."

In addition, the article contained charges that "people are shooting up all over the place with heroin, cocaine, morphine"; that at the Menlo Park facility "there's a lot of stealing from patients — and they're terrified"; and that VA police officers across the country have been "attacked, beaten and wounded" on the job with some regularity.

In a letter to the *Enquirer*, the VA protested shortly after the article appeared that an *Enquirer* reporter preparing the article was shown statistics refuting the charges. The reporter was also told, according to the VA, that the VA's medical activities are monitored by some forty different agencies, including the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals. None of these reviewing organizations, the VA said, have ever "found evidence to even come near supporting the sensational allegations accepted by the *Enquirer* as fact."

Iain Calder, the *Enquirer*'s president, responded:

I have no hesitation in standing by our story. . . . It was handled by one of our most experienced editors. . . . We have a voluminous file, which I have read, and it leaves me little doubt that the charges in our article are, if anything, understated. We did not have space to report all the anecdotes and shocking statements made by witness after witness. . . . We spoke to VA employees, VA policemen, former VA policemen, city police officers in areas where such hospitals are located, and many others with a knowledge of the situation. . . . After our story went through reporters,

the story editor and an evaluator, it was passed on to our research department, whose function is to determine the accuracy and fairness of the file. I spoke to the researcher who says she okayed the final version with confidence after reading the extensive interviews. . . . ."

Background: To illustrate what it presented as a nationwide epidemic of soaring crime rates and inadequate security at VA hospitals, the *Enquirer* article concentrated on VA medical centers in Palo Alto and Menlo Park, California. The two facilities are seven miles apart but are jointly run, sharing one police force, hospital director, and chief of police. They gained some notoriety in an October 1979 five-part series by the *Peninsula Times Tribune* in which charges of crime and mismanagement were highlighted.

On November 27, 1979, following the Times Tribune series and congressional in-

'The GAO reported that most of the major allegations were not fully pursued'

quiries, an investigation of conditions at the Palo Alto/Menlo Park facilities was launched by the VA's Office of the Inspector General. Under investigation were current and former VA employee charges of drug illegalities, extortion, insufficient staffing, crime increases, and enforcement problems. The investigation's findings were detailed in an eighteen-page report May 23, 1980, concluding that most of the specific complaints of criminal activity were unfounded or exaggerated and were precipitated by VA police officers who were resentful and frustrated over what they considered low pay, needless restriction of their duties, and an unresponsive management.

The GAO Human Resources Division issued an analysis of the inspector general's findings on August 13, 1980. In that analysis, the GAO reported that most of the major allegations were not fully pursued and that although specific incidents were addressed, the inspector general's office did not attempt to resolve the broader allegations, including the increasing crime rate at Palo

At a June 11, 1980, U.S. Senate committee hearing of the GAO and the inspector general, efforts to resolve remaining questions were initiated. The inspector general's staff returned to Palo Alto for further checking on September 2, 1980. No findings had been released at the time of the Council meeting.

Staff report: The Council commissioned Jay Thorwaldson, teacher of journalism at Stanford University and former *Peninsula Times Tribune* ombudsman, to investigate the complaint at the local level.

The Enquirer article cited a "one-year study of crimes at the Menlo Park/Palo Alto facilities" which shows dramatic percentage increases in narcotics thefts, assaults with a deadly weapon and vandalism.

Thorwaldson found that the percentages were taken from a crime statistics report by Jerome Hoban, the hospitals' police chief, dated January 24, 1979, and containing a statistical breakdown and comparison of criminal incidents in 1977 and 1978. The 500 percent increase in narcotics thefts used by the Enquirer actually reflects an increase from two such thefts in 1977 to twelve in 1978. Chief Hoban explained that "this was due to employee thefts from ward stock." The 400 percent increase in assault with a deadly weapon represented an increase from one such assault in 1977 to five in 1978.

Later crime statistics, presumably available to the Enquirer prior to its April 1980 edition, show three narcotics thefts for the first six months of 1979 and one assault with a deadly weapon for the same period. Subsequent summaries of monthly crime reports prepared by Chief Hoban indicated drops in nearly all other crime-report categories except for the dollar value of losses from theft of personal property and government property. Vandalism during the study period rose from twelve occurrences in 1977 to 52 in 1978. However, a decline in vandalism incidents from thirty-one in the first six months of 1978 to twenty-seven in the corresponding months of 1979 is reported by Chief Hoban.

The Enquirer article recited a list of "commonplace" offenses at the Menlo Park facility including murder, extortion, dope dealing and overdose, theft, prostitution, and suicide.

According to Chief Hoban, VA officials, police officers, and staff members, suicides occur several times a year and perhaps could be considered common.

Concerning drug use, VA Officer Al Brown said that in his twenty-eight months with the VA he has made "quite a few drug arrests, most just marijuana" and that "the hardest thing I ever had [to deal with] was cocaine and PCP." VA Police Lieutenant Vernon A. Mize, said, "I know a lot of marijuana smoking goes on" at the Menlo Park facility. He added that a 1978 memo from John J. Peters, then director of the hospitals, cited reports of drug activities involving patients and staff members.

Thomas Jackson, former court liaison officer for the two facilities, supported allegations in the article, including one attributed to him, of drug abuse and frequent overdosing both from illegal drugs and wrongly administered medications. Illicit drugs on the grounds "is big," said Mr. Jackson. "They were finding syringes, rubber bands, spoons."

"It's here, yes," Chief Hoban said of drug use. "A guy wants marijuana, he can

get all he wants four blocks away [from the Menlo Park facility]. Here [the Palo Alto hospital], he can go to Cogswell Plaza," a small park in downtown Palo Alto that is a hangout for VA patients and others. "As far as being a tremendous problem on the wards," Chief Hoban said, "It's not reported as such by the nursing service."

Allegations of people "shooting up all over the place with heroin, cocaine, morphine . . . " were not supported by Mr.

> 'I can't truthfully say in my mind that I said it'

Thomas Jackson, former VA employed

Thorwaldson's observation or his interviews with hospital staff members.

Theft of personal and government property, although not identified by interviewed staff members as a serious problem, did occur with some frequency and could be classified, according to their statements, as commonplace.

There have been reported extortion attempts by staff against patients or patients against patients. These have been investigated by the inspector general and GAO and dismissed.

Thomas Jackson was one of two named sources used by the Enquirer. Attributed to Mr. Jackson was the claim that "murders at the two hospitals average four or five a year and that drug overdoses occur weekly.'

Mr. Jackson said about that statement. "I can't truthfully say in my mind that I said it, but I can't truthfully say I didn't. It sounds a little heavy." He said he wondered about the statement when he first read the article, adding that he personally would not be surprised if there were unreported murders but that he cannot document this, does not know about and will not stand behind the four or five murders a year charge. He did support the statement on drug overdoses.

A search of newspaper clip files and interviews with VA staff, turned up one recorded murder at the facilities in the past sev-

Mr. Jackson also raised the issue in the article of VA "cover-ups" of crimes. Peninsula Times Tribune editors felt that they have carefully documented such "cover-up" cases, and said they have additional information not yet put into print. Lending force to the allegation of "cover-ups" is a report by Chief Hoban that discusses his views of deficiencies in the VA police setup locally and nationwide. Chief Hoban's repeated references to the need for a police system that cannot be controlled at the local level "to ensure that no collusion to squash or cover up an incident is perpetrated" indicates a concern about the possibility of censorship within the present system. Chief Hoban said he knew of no such censorship at the facilities in his charge.

The Enquirer article contained statements by an unnamed VA police lieutenant charging VA officials with soliciting incarcerated vets for hospitalization. Lieutenant Mize, Chief Hoban and Albert Washko, recentlyappointed assistant director of the hospitals, traced the statements to a misreading of a VA national employee newsletter article, va REACHES PAST STEEL BARS TO HELP. The September 1979 article reported that the VA made 75,300 face-to-face briefings on veterans benefits during the prior four years with veterans who were in prison, jail, on probation or paroled.

Lieutenant Mize said that he is aware of VA programs for prisoners and that the "criminal element" at the VA "is a real problem, but you've got me about whether they are direct from prison."

In a joint interview, Chief Hoban and Lawrence Stewart, Palo Alto VA's assistant director trainee, agreed that such out-ofprison-into-the-VA recruitment described in the Enquirer quotation not only does not take place, but that it is specifically against VA regulations.

On the estimate that 40 percent of VA patients have been convicted of crimes, Dan Walls, acting chief of mental hygiene at the Menlo Park Facility, said that actual statistics would be almost impossible to get, but "my best guess is about 5 percent. I don't know how by any stretch of the imagination you could make it 40 percent." Chief Hoban called the 40 percent figure "an incredible exaggeration."

Also quoted in the Enquirer article was the statement of John Strickland, a former VA police officer, that VA police are assaulted "all the time."

A survey by the psychology division of the Palo Alto VA hospitals covering February through April 1979 reported forty-three assaults by patients on staff members resulting in injuries. Division officials then instituted a "crisis intervention training program" for staff members and a similar survey for the same months this year showed only fourteen injury-producing assaults.

A composite study of engineering-division incident reports for the Palo Alto hospitals, along with workers' compensation reports, and police reports produced these figures for assaults - presumably the more serious assaults, not the day-to-day ward scuffles: August 1977 through July 1978 - thirty-four assaults; August 1978 through July 1979 thirty-six assaults; August 1979 through July 1980 - twenty-one assaults.

The analysis of police officer injuries in the GAO report states that, based on the inspector general's study, medical center police sustained slightly fewer injuries per employee than the nursing, dietetic, engineering, and housekeeping employees considered as a group.

At the national level, the GAO first reported on shortcomings in the VA's control over drugs in 1975. In a follow-up report June 24, 1980, the GAO stated that "millions of potentially dangerous drugs are vulnerable to pilferage and abuse. . . . The VA does not have any effective program for controlling the use of, or accounting for, drugs dispensed by many of its pharmacy units." Currently, the report said, VA estimates of annual drug dollar losses is \$17.4 million. The GAO report did not involve the question of outside drugs introduced into VA facilities.

An April 1980 VA Department of Medicine and Surgery memo on security and law enforcement disclosed apprehension over property thefts at VA hospitals. The memo, which went to the directors of VA medical centers across the country, stated that losses

'Sensationalized, generalized, exaggerated and, in some cases, misrepresented'

reported in government equipment and supplies exceeded \$2.8 million in the last fiscal year and recommended increased police presence at nightfall and in parking lots at certain times of the day and night.

Action: Using sweeping assertions and offering no verification to readers, the *National Enquirer* constructed a story that likened VA hospitals to "chambers of horrors" and "criminal cesspools." The Council has been unable to unearth evidence to support such a blanket characterization.

There is some crime in VA hospitals, some dissension and occasional abuse within the system. There are also questions, not yet answered, of the reliability of VA-collected crime statistics.

But it is the Council's belief that the *Enquirer* article sensationalized, generalized, exaggerated and, in some cases, misrepresented the facts of crime in VA hospitals.

The council finds the complaint warranted.

**Concurring:** Abel, Bell, Brady, Ghiglione, Huston, Isaacs, Lawson, Maynard, Pulitzer, Rusher, and Williams.

## CBS program on Love Canal judged fair

**Issue:** Was CBS unfair to Dr. David Axelrod and the New York State Health Department in a 60 Minutes broadcast about public health concerns at Love Canal?

Complaint: Dr. Robert W. Miller protested that in a 60 Minutes segment CBS news unfairly pictured New York State Health Commissioner David Axelrod and the health department as negligent and uncaring in their response to warnings that toxic material in Love Canal might endanger more residents of the area than had been originally thought. Dr. Miller is a former chairman of the Committee on Environmental Hazards of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He was supported in his complaint by Dr. Laurence Finberg, present chairman of the committee.

The broadcast was part of the 60 Minutes show of May 25, 1980. It was narrated by Harry Reasoner and entitled, "Warning: Living Here May Be Hazardous to Your Health." Mr. Reasoner made two assertion in the introduction. One was that there was still no agreement on how dangerous the Love Canal wastes were even though two years had passed since the discovery of the health hazard. The other assertion was that the State of New York had begun to fear that a costly precedent might be set if additional Love Canal residents were moved away at public expense without a clear showing that their health was in peril.

The program focused on Beverly Paigen, a researcher at the Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo, New York, as the person who warned of new levels of danger. It focused on Dr. Axelrod for response.

Dr. Miller complained that Mr. Reasoner "disparaged" a 1978 health department report on the Love Canal crisis as a "fancy brochure," and did not describe its contents.

Dr. Miller complained further that Dr. Paigen "was presented as a knowledgeable investigator of human disease." He said that her competence is in the field of molecular biology, not in clinical medicine, epidemiology, or public health, which he called "the areas of principal importance in studying the residents of the Love Canal."

Finally, Dr. Miller complained that Dr. Axelrod was portrayed in the program as having been "negligent" in that he did not evacuate families quickly enough from the danger area. He said that Dr. Axelrod "came

off badly" and that Dr. Paigen "appeared to be a heroine."

CBS defended the description of the brochure as "fancy" by noting that it was printed on glossy stock and contained pictures. The network argued that the contents of the brochure were adequately described by Mr. Reasoner in his summary of actions taken by the health department immediately after the discovery of a health hazard at Love Canal. CBS defended Dr. Paigen as "a very reputable environmental carcinogenecist whose work for five years has involved sophisticated use of the tools of epidemiology."

"A panel of scientists convened by HEW and EPA to examine her Love Canal studies not only did not challenge her competence, but, in the main, recommended following the leads suggested by her work," CBS said.

Council members were given a partial chronology of events from the declaration (April 25, 1978) that there was a public health hazard at Love Canal to the agreement by the federal government (July 31, 1980) to provide \$15 million to buy the homes of a second group of evacuees. The chronology included New York Gov. Hugh Carey's appointment of a committee on June 4, 1980, to evaluate all the scientific data on Love Canal. The chronology showed that at the time of the CBS broadcast (May 25, 1980) there was indeed no agreement on the degree of danger at Love Canal and that there was controversy over who would shoulder the cost of relocation.

The brochure mentioned in the complaint was a report to the governor and the legislature on the first four months of the Love Canal crisis. It was a thirty-two page booklet with a two-color cover prepared by state health department employees and printed by the state contract printer for twenty cents a copy, according to Frances Tarlton, executive assistant to Dr. Axelrod. The department prepares some 200 reports a year at an average of fifty cents a copy, she said.

CBS called Dr. Paigen a "cancer research scientist" in the broadcast, and it describes her as an "unpaid expert working with the Love Canal homeowners . . ." Her job title at the state's Roswell Park Memorial Institute at Buffalo, a facility for cancer research and treatment, was indeed "cancer research scientist." Dr. Paigen received her Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1967. It was in biology. Since 1974 she had been researching the biochemical basis for the genetic factors that make one person more vulnerable than another to chemicals in the environment.

She said she went to Love Canal in the summer of 1978 because she had heard that there were some families in which all the members were sick following exposure to the chemical wastes. If that were true, it might have provided her with a study group of people whose genetic characteristics predisposed them to harm from chemicals.

Dr. Paigen told the Council staff that she found the illnesses were related to geographical factors instead of familial factors, specifically that the illnesses were related to distance from the sites of exposure to the toxic wastes. Among other phenomena, Dr. Paigen said, she found a "whopping" increase above normal expectations for the number of miscarriages outside the previously circumscribed danger area.

Dr. Axelrod acknowledged to Council staff that Dr. Paigen's work has been helpful, but, he said it had not "served as a substantive basis for any action taken by the health department."

Dr. David Rall, director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, told Council staff that Dr. Paigen's data were substantial enough to warrant further studies. Dr. Rall was chairman of a panel of epidemiologists called together at the request of Rep. John LaFalce of New York to evaluate research on Love Canal.

Dr. Miller backed up his view that the program made Dr. Axelrod appear negligent with this contention: "In fact, with each new

> 'Dr. Axelrod had ample opportunity to say no and to expand on his answer'

increment of medical information, outside scientists were consulted, and their advice was acted upon."

That process was demonstrated in the CBS program. Dr. Axelrod was shown in February 1979 recommending that pregnant women and children under two move away from homes outside the area covered by his earlier recommendation. The program dwells at length on the fact that Dr. Axelrod submitted the state's research for evaluation by a blue-ribbon panel.

If Dr. Axelrod appeared unsympathetic in the broadcast, it was not because of anything CBS did to him. It was the result of his having willingly accepted professional and legal restraints that prevented him from answering questions about the state research or the panel.

The key question was whether Dr. Axelrod was responding to political pressure in refusing to recommend further evacuations with the consequent public cost.

Mr. Reasoner asked Dr. Axelrod that question directly and Dr. Axelrod had ample

opportunity to say no and to expand on his answer.

Action: The Council finds that Dr. Beverly Paigen was accurately described in the CBS 60 Minutes segment, "Warning: Living Here May be Hazardous to Your Health," and that Dr. David Axelrod and the New York State Health Department were not characterized as negligent and uncaring. The complaint is found unwarranted.

Concurring: Abel, Bell, Brady, Ghiglione, Huston, Isaacs, Lawson, Maynard, McKay, Pulitzer, Rusher, and Williams.

#### Richmond logic should apply to pretrials

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Richmond Newspapers* v. *Virginia* affirms the principle of openness as both a safeguard and a vitalizing element in American democracy. For the first time the court has given judicial recognition to the force of the First Amendment — and not just the Sixth — as a constitutional underpinning for access to trials by the public and the press. This important extension in the accountability of the courts is wedded to a broadened avenue for public access, via the media, to knowledge about the operations of government in all its phases.

Though the multiplicity of separate concurring opinions makes speculative any forecast of the specific boundaries that may be set in future court rulings, a majority of the justices now seems ready to subscribe to what in the past has always been a minority view: That the societal value of the First Amendment has as one of its prime ingredients the guaranteeing to the citizenry of access to the information they need for resolving their destiny through free and open debate.

In its application to the criminal justice system, the basic decision by Chief Justice Burger is eloquent in explaining how indispensable a foundation of openness is to public respect. He traces back to English common law even before the Norman Conquest an awareness that fairness is bulwarked by public attendance at trials. Unless the people perceive the judicial process to be fair, the Chief Justice observes, confidence in the integrity of the process wanes. This invites vigilantism and other forms of vengeful mob action, especially where a particularly shocking crime is involved. "The crucial prophy-

lactic aspects of the administration of justice cannot function in the dark," the Burger decision says in behalf of the Court.

These strictures by the Chief Justice are just as relevant to pretrial moves to close courtrooms or to seal records as they are to trials themselves, the more so since nine out of every ten criminal cases are now disposed of without formal trial. Nevertheless, the predominant tone of the concurring opinions in the Richmond case still sharply differentiates between rights of access to trials as against pretrial proceedings. The hope must be that the illogic of such a distinction will ultimately persuade a clear majority of the Court to set aside the restrictive approach it applied to pretrial proceedings in Gannett Co., Inc. v. DePasquale last year. Certainly, public scrutiny is just as essential to public trust in preliminary hearings as it is in trials.

In any event the accent the Court has put on the importance of openness is bound to have a constructive influence on the thinking of trial judges everywhere and thus stop the rash of courtroom closings that came in the wake of the Gannett Co. decision. Beneficial as such a development is sure to be in providing the public with more information about the judicial process, it will not remove all sources of possible confrontation between press and bench nor will it reduce the desirability of continued cooperation between both groups to assure that openness will reinforce, not obstruct, observance of the constitutional mandate for protecting the right of accused persons to a fair trial. That occasional disagreements will arise is made certain by the Court's reminder that the right of press access to courtrooms is not absolute and by the absence from all the decisions of specific criteria on when the requirements of justice may make closure appropriate.

Past studies by The National News Council have underscored how helpful more effective conduits for joint action at state and local levels can be in making secure the freedoms guaranteed by the First and Sixth Amendments without sacrificing one in defense of the other. The Supreme Court's acknowledgment that the Constitution makes the press surrogate for the people in gathering and disseminating the information required for intelligent citizenship provides an ideal launching pad for extending the initiatives along this line already taken by the media and the bar - initiatives that have succeeded best when they are rooted not in prohibitions but rather in the voluntary exercise of responsibility and understanding to resolve differences that may arise.

Concurring: Abel, Bell, Brady, Ghiglione, Huston, Isaacs, Lawson, Maynard, McKay, Pulitzer, Rusher, and Williams. "How we get energy out of coal without taking the coal out of the ground."



"A lot of coal in America —
millions of tons, in fact — is too deep
or too slanted to be mined by any
conventional techniques," says Gulf
Engineer Jerry Daniel. "At Gulf,
we're working with the Department



Air through injection well supports combustion of coal at A, fire heats coal at B, which produces gas recovered through production well, C.

of Energy on a way to extract the energy from that coal without mining it. We drill an injection well to set fire to the coal. By burning some of the coal, we heat up the rest, which causes it to produce gas. That's why it's called underground coal gasification.

"We had a test burn here in Rawlins, Wyoming, late in 1979, and we're setting up another one. Our hope is that by 1990, industry will be able to use this kind of synthetic gas, which of course will make us less dependent on expensive imported crude oil as an energy source.

"At Gulf, our first priority is to get all the oil and natural gas we can out of resources right here in America. But we're working on a lot of other good ideas, too. Underground coal gasification is one of them; and we're working with synthetic fuels, tar sands, geothermal energy, and other alternative energy sources.

"Overall, you might say that the business we're really in is the business of energy for tomorrow."



Gulf people: energy for tomorrow.

Gulf Oil Corporation

"Someday we may use gas from coal the way we now use natural gas."

## The Lower case

## State prison guard suspended for distributing KKK literature

The Vidette Messenger (Valparaiso, Ind.) 6/21/80



#### Mobil Reports Flow From Hibernia Well

The New York Times 11/29/80

State provides motorists with winter conditions

Greenwich Time 11/7/80

#### Airport commission to consider holding hearing on runway

The Columbia (S.C.) Record 11/3/80

"All the President's Men" (8 p.m. NBC). One of the many triumphs of this spellbinding political thriller about the Watergate-related events leading to the resignation of President Nixon is that the audience is constantly fascinated and involved. Jason Robards gives his best film performance in years as the editor while Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman come when we learn at long last who actually did shoot J.R.

Eugene (Ore.) Register-Guard 11/8/80

## Excess of vitamins harmful, expensive specialist warns

London Free Press (Ontario, Canada) 6/22/80

CORPORATE WOMAN

Back to Billings: Five years of quiet progress

Broad gains in the work force without ruffling feathers

Business Week 11/3/80

Milo and Pat
Magnano in
the kitchen of
their Queen
Anne home (below), with Milo
Jr. beating eggs
and little
brother Tony.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer 9/27/80

#### Enemies of good writing

There is a lot of writing at which we'd cringe if it appeared in our papers. However, the same writing problems plagues APME's reports.

APME News 11/80

#### Correction

The News American incorrectly reported in an article Wednesday that parking meter rates are higher in Baltimore than in Washington, D.C. In fact, Washington's rates are lower.

The News American (Baltimore, Md.) 11/6/80

#### Gateway's Gay Athlete Of Week

John Gay, Gateway's powerful senior running back, turned Plum into pudding with four touchdowns and a career-high 219 rushing yards.

Pittsburgh Press 10/9/80

KANSAS CITY — America is learning how to spell "hemmorrhoids." George Brett is that famous.

New York Post 10/17/80

Despite our best efforts, black employment is still rising

The Post (West Palm Beach, Fla.) 10/3/80

CJR asks readers who contribute items to this department to send only original clippings suitable for reproduction; please include the name and date of publication, as well as your name and address.

Can you find the glue in this tree?



We at Boise Cascade haven't been able to ... yet.

Trees, you see, are full of glue. It's called lignin, and it holds the wood fibers together.

This means the sheets, or veneers, we use to make plywood are already full of natural adhesives, and yet, we have to apply a glue made from crude oil to get them to stick together.

We haven't been able to find a way to fully activate the lignin those veneers are full of, to "awaken" it, make it sticky.

If we could, they'd stick together naturally, and we'd cut oil consumption and manufacturing costs.

That's why we're working with university and industry groups to find ways to awaken the lignin in those veneers. We're not there yet, but we're getting close.

Working to get glue from trees is an example of our kind of resource management, the kind that produces jobs, products, profits and thriving forests.

